WHO CAN HE BE,

OR,

WHO IS HIS FATHER?

VOL. I.

Books lately published by J. DICK.

1. AMATORY TALES OF SPAIN, FRANCE, SWITZERLAND, and the MEDITERRANEAN; containing The Fair Andalusian, Rosolio of Palermo, and the Maltese Portrait. In 4 vol. price 20s. by Honoria Scott, Author of The Winter in Edinburgh, &c.

2. A WINTER IN EDINBURGH, a Novel, 3 vol. 12mo. price 15s. by Honoria Scott.

"We have seldom, indeed, found such a combination of various talent, as is displayed in the Winter in Edinburgh. Whether the writer describes the romantic scenery of Scotland, and strays among wild solitudes or the fallen remains of antient grandeur, whether she indulges in scenes of broad humour, or of refined and elegant wit, or whether in simple narrative, she appeals only to the hearts of her readers, her powers are alike felt, and her talents equally resplendent."

SATIRIST, Feb. 1810.

3. THE CALEDONIAN MUSICAL MUSEUM, 2 vol. price 4s. 6d. per volume, with Part First of the Music, price 3s. 6d. in which will be found (among many others) 200 Songs, with Music, by the celebrated Robert Burns; embellished with a Head and Fac-simile of the Handwriting of that Immortal Bard. The whole edited by his Son. The Music, which is adapted for the Voice, Violin, and Pianoforte, may be had together or separate.

4. BEAUTIES OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS ENTERTAINMENTS, neat Pocket Volume, coloured Front, fancy bindings, 3s.

In the Press, and speedily will be published, by J. DICK,

THE AUTHORESS,

A Novel, in 4 Vol. written in the Style of Le Sage, by Honoria Scott, Author of A Winter in Edinburgh, Amatory Tales, &c.

*** This will be entirely a Characteristic work of Humour and Anecdote, containing the Author's Literary Adventures, with a Sketch of her Life.

WHO CAN HE BE,

OR,

WHO IS HIS FATHER?

A

NOVEL,

IN TWO VOLUMES.

By the Author of Two Popular Works,

LATELY PUBLISHED.

"Is there in human form, that bears a heart—
"A Wretch! a Villain! lost to love and truth!
"That can, with studied, sly, ensnaring art,
"Betray sweet Jenny's unsuspecting youth?
"Curse on his perjur'd arts!"

ROBERT BURNS.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED BY J. DICK,

24, *Hollywell-Street, Strand,* (*late Chiswell-Street*);

AND SOLD BY ALL THE BOOKSELLERS.

1810.

E. Blackader, Printer, Took's Court, Chancery-lane, London

WHO CAN HE BE,

OR,

WHO IS HIS FATHER?

CHAPTER I.

THE sun had sunk beneath a cloudless sky; and eve's pensive shade, involved in obscurity each surrounding object. Seamore, with a soft melancholy, watched the departing rays of light, and withdrew from the window, where he had been engaged in contemplation. His thoughts were serious—they recurred to an event he fain would have

forgot, but it was impossible! Seamore had married a most amiable woman, for whose death he wore the external garb of mourning—that garb alike assumed by the real and fictitious mourner.

Attracted by her large fortune, more than her engaging manners, possession dispelled the charm. As an union founded on interest is seldom productive of happiness, Mrs. Seamore had soon to experience the careless indifference and cold neglect of her husband—a most animated companion abroad, while at home he was that cheerless unsocial being, whose conversation afforded no variety, being the ebulition of a discontented mind. His manners, when not under restraint, were agreeable and insinuating—his gaiety was admired by all who knew it not to be

assumed; fond of society, he on all occasions indulged his inclination, and found his company eagerly courted by those fashionable friends whose sole idea of friendship consists in visiting and being visited, and for the sake of notoriety, so that their rooms are filled, care not whether with the deserving or undeserving. Among the promiscuous groupe of heartless beings, Mrs. Seamore could not select one whose mind was congenial with her own, so that it might be said she lived a perfect recluse, and passed her time with little satisfaction to herself; many called her disposition unsocial, but some there were, who rightly interpreted her reserve, and among the discerning few may be classed Miss Ermina Egerton; her sympathetic bosom duly felt the untold grief of Mrs. Seamore, and by

the most unremitting attention sought to alleviate it. This excused to herself, and even to others, the frequency of her visits to Brunswick Square. The amiable object of her kind solicitude was not insensible to her friendly endeavours, and though they proved ineffectual, nevertheless felt grateful for them.

The birth of a daughter gave a different turn to her thoughts, and seemed to promise that felicity she was doomed never to enjoy; for soon her new-born joys dwindled into the usual dull monotony in which her sad life passed.

To rear the little Helen was her constant care; while her maternal bosom throbbed for the well-being of an object so totally neglected by her father, she shuddered as she reflected, should it please Heaven to call her, what would

become of her innocent child; for her she wearied Heaven with prayers to preserve a life of which she had lately become regardless——Spare me, oh Providence, would she say, to watch o'er this blossom; let not the chill blast of cold unkindness blight the tender bud; Anxiety and watchfulness undermined her delicate constitution; and this rose, scarce blown, was plucked from the stem by the chill hand of death; at the period Helen was seven, her mind, continually harrassed, sunk under disappointment, patient resignation, and amiable forbearance, rendered her an uncomplaining victim to unmerited severity, not in the least affected by her death. Seamore thought fit to appear sorrowful for the sake of decorum, and so well counterfeited grief, that all his acquaintances deplored

a loss he felt not as such—happy to be released from one he considered a burden, he now felt himself at liberty to indulge in those pleasures, the shackles of matrimony had in some measure prevented him from; not that he sacrificed much to domestic felicity, but it was his wish to preserve appearance; and had Mrs. Seamore left him no child to perpetuate her memory, he would have been better pleased, for now, though rid of his wife, he had still an incumbrance or tie that would in time call for the exertion of parental affection—she must be provided for, and perhaps share a large portion of his fortune; cheering himself with the idea, that as a female Helen could pass best part of her life at school, he dismissed all intruding and unpleasant reflections; disposed only to think of

the present, and to enjoy that which was in his power, his mansion was the resort of all the fashionable and gay; the most scientific admired his taste, and sought celebrity by adopting his opinion as their own.

Thus flattered, Seamore, to all appearance, had not an ungratified wish. His friends, judging by their own standard, pronounced him a complete happy man. Comprehensive word; yet, according to their opinion, he was possessed of every ingredient calculated to promote happiness.

The town residence of Seamore was replete with whatever was fashionable, elegant, and useless. His villa at Windsor, if such it might be called, boasted of equal magnificence; and his hunting box excited the envy of those, whose sport it assisted. His

carriages were as various as the amusements he every day selected; his entertainments were by far the most splendid of any of his competitors, and afforded him the greatest satisfaction, because they could not be equalled, at least so said those who partook of them; and Seamore was content. If he was silent for a moment, the loud buzz of adulation assailed his ears. 'Twas regret, a husband so fond, must feel for the dear departed Mrs. Seamore. Then a look of disapproval from another, gave the wished-for hint—that her name might not be mentioned—'twould revive his grief—the little Helen! the sweet representative of her sainted mother, was removed from his presence, by the considerate Miss Egerton. The dear little angel was so vastly like her Mam-

ma, that to look at the one reminded you of the other (and so thought Seamore, though he cared not to coincide openly in the opinion). Miss Egerton wished much to obtain the fame of Seamore, and left no means unattempted. Possessing much penetration, she was at no great loss to discover his real sentiments. She next paid her attention to the interesting orphan, the enchanting, engaging Alfred Mordaunt! Who can he be? was the question, unanimously asked by the friends of Mr. Seamore. And he, to satisfy their laudable curiosity, had informed them, he was the child of a distant relation of Mrs. Seamore. He had often declared, it was his intention to bring up young Mordaunt as his own. The generosity he showed toward this child, obtained for him

the approbation of many. He made no distinction between him and the little Helen. But some there were, invidious enough to call his kindness ill bestowed. But then he had to console him, the flattering approval of Miss Egerton. This young lady seldom differed in opinion with Seamore; an union of thought had almost tempted her to wish that an union of hands might be the result (but on this point, and perhaps the only one, they could not agree.) Seamore certainly felt his vanity gratified by the attention of a fine showy woman, of twenty-eight; yet, as he had resolved to gratify other passions than vanity, he proved insensible to the honor intended him; though he cared not to betray his real sentiments, perhaps from the disinclination he felt to give death

to the lady's hopes. 'Twas cruel kindness to give birth to expectations, he never meant to realize; yet, how could he, for the mere sake of candor, forego the many advantages arising from the acquaintance of Miss Egerton? how would his table suffer, by the loss of that lady's taste? Those improvements, for the invention of which he had claimed the credit, where would they be? 'Twas impossible, to part with such rare acquisitions; and to retain them, he considered the peace of mind of his fair friend but a trifling sacrifice. By that sacred name, he conjured her not to leave him in his present dilemma..

The tender heart of Ermina yielded. She could not refuse the eloquent petition of the interesting widower, and as Marshal, Mrs. Sea-

more's companion was still retained, her delicate scruples became silenced. What hopes, and what fears, did this simple request excite? Seamore must surely be in love; but of course must wait till a more distant period would render the avowal of his passion not so indecorous. Already in thought she was elevated to that state, she panted to enjoy; and like Seamore considered only the fortune of the object, with whom she wished to unite her fate. As wealth constituted her chief happiness, with its possession she included every other enjoyment. Imagination begun her work, and launched the fair Ermina, in a sea of pleasure. Such an establishment, such an equipage, was what she most devoutly wished.

CHAPTER II.

Ermina Egerton had descended from a highly respectable Scottish family; by œconomy, her small fortune, instead of diminishing, had rather increased. She was possessed of many talents, which she variously employed, but chiefly for the advantage of her friends. Miss Egerton embroidered for one, drew for another—oh! and even dictated for some. But then, to be sure, her friends could do no less than make her trifling presents,

by way of return; and thus truly might she be said, to live continually among her friends.

Now fortune, who sometimes by way of freak (and to refute the general opinion), rewards merit, took the fair Ermina under her protection; and like a good genii, alighted our adventuress at the habitation of an elderly Lady, who meeting at a watering-place, took a most strange and unaccountable liking to Miss Egerton, inasmuch that Mrs. Wentworth was never so happy, as when in the society of Miss Egerton, and could scarce separate from her.

Ermina possessed in an eminent degree that charm, which made her company universally courted: 'twas complaicancy, a quality highly prized by a peevish, fretful, neglected old

woman. I must proceed immediately to explain my meaning by neglected, lest my readers should conclude Mrs. Wentworth to be poor, and consequently unworthy their notice. Not so: Mrs. Wentworth, in her early days had disobliged her relations, by marrying a man in middling circumstances. This amiable being, moving in an humble sphere, by an unexpected casualty became the possessor of a large fortune, which, however, he lived not long to enjoy.

Considerably enriched, his widow sincerely, and with an undivided heart, lamented his loss; for a more deserving character, no mortal could e'er lay claim to. Mrs. Wentworth had been a widow sixteen years, when the good fortune of Miss Egerton placed her in a situation, calculated to excite the

interest of Mrs. Wentworth, who, on being made acquainted with the respectability of her family, offered Ermina an asylum with her, provided she would overlook the many peculiarities of her temper; Miss Egerton felt not inclined to refuse so good an offer.

Friendship begat confidence—and Mrs. Wentworth made a free communication to Ermina, of the total alienation of her family, a breach she artfully and studiously sought to widen. She awakened in the bosom of Mrs. Wentworth a sense of injury, nor quitted the subject till she persuaded her it was unjust to remember in prosperity those who had forgot her in adversity; besides, 'twould be ungrateful, thought Mrs. Wentworth, to neglect her young and only friend, whose attention and assiduity had stood the

test of years—at her demise she bequeathed the whole of her large fortune to Ermina. It cannot be supposed she mourned too severely a loss that had been productive to her of so much real benefit. Ermina was no hypocrite, yet it was decorous to follow to the grave, with a look of serious sober sadness, the remains of her friend. Her sudden acquisition of wealth reached not the ears of all, though it did some, and to those some who might be deceived, Miss Egerton thought fit to pass for a fine lady, accounting to them in a manner most advantageous to herself, for her good fortune.

A something indirectly was hinted, of services rendered Mrs. Wentworth, in the days of her adversity; yet so guardedly advanced as not to amount

to a positive assertion, lest any, better acquainted with the fact, should call in question the veracity of Miss Egerton. Many there were who believed the tale as she related it; and among them Mr. Seamore, who distinguished her with marked attention; and if any consideration could have induced him to enter again into the matrimonial bonds, it would have been Miss Egerton; but as the prisoner, just restored to liberty, longs to rove at large—so felt Seamore!—the shackles, that for awhile had fettered were now removed, and he determined to enjoy his freedom: he is the worst of slaves who hugs his chains, and calls his gaoler kind—so thought Seamore; and to this consideration he sacrificed an ample fortune (though not so ample as report, or his own belief, had induced

him to think) for reckoning on the aggregate sum, he had not allowed for the reduction made by a showy appearance and splendid equipage.

Miss Egerton lived much beyond what her fortune really was, though only proportionate to what she wished it to be thought; her aim was to attract, by her elegant manner of living, friends; and these friends, by an œconomical trait in her character, she contrived to make contribute to her expenditure, by a thousand ingenious contrivances already alluded to, and many cheerfully complied with the avaricious demands of one they considered rich, and granted to parsimony what they would have denied to real want.

Miss Egerton, almost out of humour at the ill success of her schemes, de-

vised stratagems anew, to ensnare the heart of the invulnerable Seamore, but he resisting all her attacks, had the address to conceal, even from her, his sentiments, and not suspecting his aversion, or rather determination, against marriage, she was not devoid of hope; and most agreeable to his wishes, still persevered. An unison of sentiment is perhaps the most endearing cement that can bind to each other two mortals, at least, so thought Miss Egerton, and if she did not actually feel that happy similarity, she hoped affecting it would do as well.

The approval of those we love, affords, in general, an additional pleasure; Miss Egerton thus reasoning, was profuse in her approbation of Seamore's generosity towards Alfred: this was as much as to infer, his benevolent incli-

nation would meet with no interruption from her—for how uncongenial to a liberal, generous mind, to be linked to a niggardly partner! for she undoubtedly imputed every act of Seamore's to the pure spirit of benevolence—'tis like telling a man, of a bad temper, that you think he is possessed of a good one, and he will on all occasions seek to conceal it, in order that he may not prove your opinion erroneous.

Miss Egerton next sought to conciliate the affection of Helen, and to excite in her young bosom the interest felt for a parent, probably flattering herself she should soon be called upon to fill that character, but that was not the intention of Seamore, and the pains she was at to prepossess Helen in her favor, proved of none effect; she had,

however, for her reward, the gratitude of the child; she acknowledged her tenderness by every endearing proof of infant love, but Miss Egerton expected and wished for another return; a return she now despaired of ever meeting.———Greatly disappointed, as time developed the real sentiments of Seamore, delicacy forbade her openly expressing the mortification she experienced. She concealed under the aspect of politeness the indignation she felt at his uncandid behaviour, and outwardly kept up the same seeming friendship. Miss Egerton had a powerful motive that influenced her conduct, for already had her acquaintance rallied her on the attention of the widower, and already had she yielded a blushing acknowledgment. 'Tis true, all this amounted to nothing, but if

they chose to construe it into something, was she to blame?—if they paid their court to her, in the expectation of an event that never took place, could she help it?

Some officious friends to whom Seamore had represented Alfred as the son of Mrs. Mordaunt, ventured to remonstrate, and advised him against giving the boy a liberal education, as he had often declared was his intention; 'twould fill his mind with high and foolish notions, whereas, a little plain learning and a good trade would be the most prudent part he could act, unless he meant to qualify him for a tutor. Seamore looked offended at the suggestion, and those, whose curiosity remained ungratified, contented themselves with whispering to each other their conjectures. Who can he be?

exclaimed one, Who is his father? exclaimed another; but none could answer the question, till one, more wise than the rest, surmised, that Alfred could be nothing less than the illegitimate son of Seamore; this savoured too much of probability to be rejected, and it was universally believed. In the meanwhile the innocent cause of all their speculation, cheerful and happy, passed the careless hour of childhood, and at each recess displayed to the little Helen those acquirements he had obtained; acquirements that received additional weight, because possessed by him she had early considered as a brother—but when forbid by her father to call him such, how great, how inconceivable her disappointment!—he is not then my brother, she said, with an artless pause of innocence, but

I may love him as such: were he your brother, returned Seamore, we should not call him Mordaunt. Helen made no reply—she had not yet learned to distinguish names; she loved Alfred as a brother, and wished to consider him as such: to him she repeated the words of her father, but the gaiety of youth effaced the impression made by them, and Seamore, too much engaged to interrupt their harmless pleasure, pursued with avidity that gay routine which left him not an unoccupied hour.

The countenance of Seamore brightened, on beholding his friend, the dashing lawyer, Barclay, springing off the barouche-box, resigned the whip to the Earl of Thor, and away drove the titled coachman. What, in the name of gloom has possessed you, Seamore? said Barclay, as soon as he

had shook the extended finger of his friend, for he had long relinquished the gothic custom of shaking hands; why man, you look as if you really grieved for Mrs. S——. The friends were alone, and in private, freedom of speech was allowed; they kept no secret from each other, and though in public, Barclay spoke pathetically of Seamore's grief, in private such language would have been considered as superfluous; their friendship had been of such long duration that none had dared question its sincerity, and as time is the best criterion to judge by, its basis seemed so firm that it defied the sly insinuations of those who envied its continuance; many unacquainted with that cement, which binds indissolubly two congenial minds, much questioned the real motives of

the friends, and invidiously pronounced them interested.

It had been whispered that Barclay was formerly the suitor of the late Mrs. Seamore, but the idea was instantly refuted on the apparent improbability, that Barclay should be so warmly attached to the man who had superseded him in her affection; true it was, that from an early disappointment, he had continued a bachelor, but whether Mrs. Seamore was the cause of this resolution none could positively assert. The cheerful and exuberant spirits of Barclay ever proved a potent antidote against the ennui that occasionally oppressed Seamore, and he flatteringly confessed himself improved by each visit. Such a versatility of talent, such a happy flow, could be rarely found united in one ob-

ject. The society of Barclay was indeed enviable; wit, repartee, and badinage beguiled time of its tedious length, and robbed the mind of thought.

CHAPTER III.

HORACE Barclay was the only son of an opulent landholder in Shropshire, a man universally esteemed and beloved; ambition marked the character of the elder Barclay, a passion Horace bid fair to gratify, and as he was intended for a liberal profession, no pains or expence was spared with his education; young Barclay was sent to Oxford, where he was admitted as a gentleman-commoner of Magdalen College, and his vanity flattered by the velvet cap and silk gown, which

distinguished him from a plebeian student. Pride, which he eminently possessed, with his situation, increased, and gained such an ascendency over him, that to its dictates he yielded every consideration: his high-raised and towering hopes met with the utmost encouragement from his partial father, who unwittingly gave nurture to those vices, of which he sowed the seeds. In the metropolis, where he constantly spent his vacations, his morals became completely vitiated, and the study of the law relinquished, for that more attracting, but less useful, of fashion. Barclay had learned to drive, knew how to outjockey grooms, and was pronounced an excellent whip, he could sing a bravura, danced to a charm, and was considered a complete ladies man. These fashionable

qualifications had proved of themselves harmless, if gaming, their usual auxiliary, had not been added. Barclay could not play at all; and he cheerfully lost, for the pleasure of having it said, he played well. But then, the eclat of losing immense sums with so much temper, like flattery from the lips of beauty, beguiled him on to ruin; and often did the infatuated young man, when linked to a sordid, or niggardly partner, pray to lose, in order to display his composure. Amid the vortex of dissipation, reflection was banished and considered an uninvited guest, subject to every incivility, and, however insinuating, was refused admittance.

Mr. Barclay, wilfully blind to the errors of his son, injudiciously complied with his exorbitant demands.

He could refuse him nothing; and to this idol soon sacrificed his own peace of mind.

The death of his father left young Barclay with the inclination, but not the means, to prosecute those follies, in which he had squandered an almost princely fortune. For the first time, he began seriously to reflect; and lamented that misplaced affection, which had put so much in his power before he knew its real value; as if awakened out of an unsubstantial dream, he called to mind those pleasing visions that had for awhile beguiled him. In solitude, that nurse of study, he devoted much of his time to the profession he was intended for; but the gloomy region of the Temple offered no variety to our young practitioner. He contemned its retirement; and despising

pedantic gravity, Coke upon Lyttleton was neglected for Hoyle. There, like a repulsed general, would he deplore his defeat, and impute his loss to the base desertion of his treacherous ally Fortune. He could not think himself to blame: his fault was venial; for who would doubt their own skill? Aided by self-conceit, he fancied he was now thoroughly acquainted with those manœuvres which had vanquished him; and only awaited the wished-for reinforcement. From the jointure of his mother, whose favorite he was, he received the timely supply; and with all the ardour of youthful expectation, renewed the attack. Compelled to retreat, the inexperienced adventurer resigned the field to those veterans, whose superior knowledge he could not cope with.

Mortified and disappointed, young Barclay buried his chagrin in Shropshire; and there, by contributing to the happiness of his indulgent parent, made her every grateful return. She had improvidently assisted his extravagance; and with himself, too late repented her easy compliance. Mrs. Barclay had ever found the task too hard, to refuse the request of an only and darling son: and if unbounded affection on his part could plead her excuse, then was she most excusable. With unwearied industry, Horace made up for the time he had lost; and that study, which had been wholly neglected, now became his favorite. Experience taught him its utility; and he listened with reverence to the sage adviser. Mrs. Barclay, by a genteel, but not rigid œconomy, considerably

increased the fortune of her son, and closed her eyes, consoled by the idea, that she had left him in affluent circumstances. Sensibly affected by her death, and maternal care, Barclay yielded himself a prey to the most violent grief.

The seat of his ancestors, by reviving sad remembrance, added to his melancholy, and became hateful to him; in consequence of which, he removed to the metropolis, and commenced his professional career.

About this time, it was said, that an affair of the heart engaged his attention; but who the favored object was, remained an impenetrable secret; and whether ejected from the court of Cupid, none could tell. But true it was, that the matter never came to issue. It had been currently reported,

that Mr. Seamore rivalled him in the lady's affection. But how unlikely, how improbable the idea! An event like that was not calculated to promote friendship; and such a friendship as subsisted between Barclay and Seamore. Yet, till the period alluded to, they were utter strangers to each other. This circumstance perplexed these curious enquirers, whose business it was, to watch whatever passed, and make observations thereon.

Barclay constantly visited at Brunswick Square; was the acisbeo of Mrs. Seamore, and attended her wherever she went. Was Seamore satisfied? and to obtain this highly desired knowledge, no pains was spared. The result was, the total rejection of that opinion, which now appeared wholly without foundation; for, however the

forgiveness of Barclay might be honored, it would disgrace his character as a lover.—And now these industrious architects, with all imaginable speed, razed the structure built by conjecture. Barclay was not the lover of Mrs. Seamore; Seamore had not rivalled him. But how account for their friendship?—With disappointment they owned it most unaccountable; still pried, still watched, and still beheld, the same intimacy, the same cordiality, which seemed to defy even time itself.

There is nothing perhaps so mortifying to an inquisitive spirit, as mystery: it constantly provokes the insatiate appetite, yet affords no gratification. Its restless craving must be satisfied; and rather than perish for want of support, it obtains food from our own surmise. Now that liberal purveyor had sup-

plied the friends of Barclay and Seamore with an ample store; some secrets, of a not very pleasant nature, it was asserted, bound them to each other.

These discerning people affected to see through the flimsy veil, that disguised the real sentiments of the friends. Now, whether this conclusion was the effect of invidiousness or observation, I shall not pretend to say. Yet, there is such a proneness in human nature, to judge another by our own standard, that these harsh interpreters might have been thereby influenced.

CHAPTER IV.

SEAMORE, relieved by an unexpected casualty from the presence of Miss Egerton, free from restraint, enjoyed himself. A friend of hers was ordered by her physician to visit Worthing; and thither Miss Egerton (who could not refuse the invalid) accompanied her. Barclay, with his usual familiarity, rallied him on the satisfaction he expressed at the departure of his fair friend. He hinted that such an acquaintance would be a valuable acquisition to Helen; she would initiate her

in all the fashionable mysteries, and fit her for the sphere she was born to adorn.

Barclay stopped short. This was a theme most discordant to Seamore; for it reminded him of an event, to which he looked forward with vexation. Helen, kept constantly at school, was rarely permitted to come home, under the specious pretext, that the unsocial abode of a widower could afford no pleasure to a young female.

Thus were the pleadings of affection silenced, and no notice taken of her frequent solicitations.—Alfred, who had been removed from Eton to the university, laboured under a similar prohibition, and was equally disregarded by Seamore. But he had resources, which were withheld from Helen. Study, and the society of his

fellow-students, snatched him from the gloom of solitude; the interesting manners of young Mordaunt converted those who, from the ambiguity of his situation, would have slighted him, into zealous friends; and the obscurity of his birth was overlooked in the goodness of his heart.—Notwithstanding which, Alfred had his enemies, and they consisted chiefly of titled youths, whose claim to antiquity could boast of no later date than the fortunate period, on which their fathers presented an address to his majesty.

He was frequently mortified by inquisitive questions relative to his parents; and the blush of ingenuous shame that tinged his cheek, afforded them consummate pleasure. They wished to lessen him in his own estimation, and the pains they were at, to

remind him of the distinction between them might have been spared, for nature had already performed the work; if unstudied elegance, and the most insinuating address, constitute the gentleman, then with justice could Alfred lay claim to that character; his disposition, not being fiery, was by some pronounced mean and abject, but Mordaunt, not easily irritated by trifles, spared resenting those insults which merited only contempt, and though he occasionally laboured under the imputation of cowardice, despised correcting with the sword the errors of the head; all he could urge in the support of his system was construed into ignoble submission. His pacific temper met with universal ridicule, a thousand humiliating remarks were made to provoke, if possible, his resentment.

Mordaunt on this occasion was unusually warm, and the affair terminated in a challenge. Henry Arrowsmith, the youth whom he called out, had long impatiently panted for this honor, and since it was obtained, owned himself delighted: the fact was, he considered Alfred as a servile being, whose association disgraced him, and whose pride he wished to lessen.

It was vacation time, and the combatants had agreed when and where to meet, much to the satisfaction of Arrowsmith, who had not much fear on the occasion—for, be it known, this hero of duelling notoriety depended on the amiable disposition of his antagonist, and actually thought he would not fight—he wished for the eclat of humbling the hitherto unsubdued Mordaunt, and had partly succeeded—all

was eager expectation—to ensure his safety more permanent, he had insisted that Mordaunt should have the first fire—his request was complied with, and, contrary to his wishes, and those of his exultant friends, Alfred took aim—it proved too sure!—and the wounded Arrowsmith proved the real courage of Alfred, and like a beacon, warned others from approaching. This fortunate rencounter concluded most favorable, and all hostilities ceased. On being made acquainted with the affair, Lord Arrowsmith said, that he, who to appease his own wounded honor, feared not to challenge the son of a Peer was worthy of his friendship, and on the recovery of his son, insisted that the combatants should make friends.

Young Arrowsmith yielded not an unwilling or reluctant compliance with

the commands of his father; naturally good and generous, his morals had not, however, escaped the contamination of bad example. To have been the champion of Alfred would have made him appear singular, and exposed him to those attacks he had not decision of character to support. Permission was obtained of Mr. Seamore, and much to the satisfaction of Alfred, he found himself in Russell Square; with due formality he was introduced to Lord and Lady Arrowsmith, their two daughters, and their nephew, Walter Hamilton. This sprig of fashion honored Alfred with the most distinguished notice, and on the first opportunity, enquired what were his accomplishments.

Lest the reader should suppose Mr. Hamilton a pedant, I will give an im-

mediate definition of what he called accomplishments. Drawing Mordaunt aside, with the utmost volubility informed him, he had just come from Egham races; but an hour, said he, fine fast goer—sister to Smuggler—bought her at Tattersall's—gave five hundred and twenty—a deal of blood though, goes in good style—was minus six hundred—a bad go! but had a deal of sport—rode her myself. Rode her yourself! Yes, was my own jockey—wore a purple jacket, striped with yellow, leathers, boots, and a famous huge pair of spurs, straw hat, scarlet and yellow 'kerchief round my neck. I dare say you must be fatigued, after riding so fast. What, eighteen miles an hour? but see, you know nothing of sport—must be broke in—hardly know how to step yet—full of metal! only

want a little training to become trac-table—either for harness or saddle—aye, so gentle a lady may guide.—Your comparison, replied Alfred with spirit, though not flattering to the individual, must be considered as such by the friend of Walter Hamilton—hard mouthed indeed—don't relish the bit!—you Oxonians are so restive, kicking and prancing, none of 'em sound and free from vice; but bear a little, and shall be a famous well-matched pair—shall go step by step along the race course of fashion, pocket thousands, and—Neigh at them all, interrupted Alfred with a laugh: I should indeed reduce myself to the level of an animal, were I to suffer the hand of fashionable folly to hold the reins of reason.

What are these? said Walter, looking at several ornamented cards.—

Lady Argyle at home, Monday, thirtieth of August—Lady Baldwin's Sunday concert, fifth of September—Countess of Hardcastle's grand dinner, a pic-nic dance, a dejeuné—don't know any thing of 'em, I suppose? I have not that pleasure, answered Alfred—oh horrid, quite genuine—want a little humanizing. Have been ballotted in, at the club houses, in St. James's Street? Have received cards of invitation from any fashionables—No, replied Mordaunt. Oh monstrous! how Gothic; quite unknown, I perceive—have got a stud? any hounds? Keep a barouche or carriage? visited the watering places—the subscription rooms—heard the Syren Catalani—suppose you have a hunting-box for the shooting season—are you a good shot—know any thing of the pugilistic art?

Not one of these qualifications, said Alfred, can I lay claim to.

Quite genuine!—must initiate you. Suppose you'll mistake badinage for serious truth, and be the dupe of every hoaxing beau.—Man! they'll quiz you eternally,—claim my pity, 'pon honor.

Tell them, what you can do!—We should never boast of our talents, replied Alfred, but let them demonstrate themselves; for felt I the wish to impart my knowledge, 'twould be as unintelligible to you, as yours is to me.

Believe it would.—Shall be better acquainted bye and bye.—Dressed fashionable enough, however, can't make any improvement there.—Brass heels, egad! two inches higher than mine, must rate that fellow Hoby.—These hussars, don't look dashing.

Hat, quite the ton, true Bond Street fashion.

Was desperately gay last season.—Gave sixteen guineas a week for a house on the East Cliff, at Brighton.—What say you to that?—Was the admiration of all on the Stein!—Set a fashion to-day, and rejected it on the morrow, merely to exert my power.—Ogled the fair ones!—gave a sigh to one, a smile to another, and played the general lover.—Put in for a raffle, never waited till it was thrown for.—Passed the forenoon at Donaldson's,—lounged with all I met,—played loo—discussed politics with the men, fashions with the women—and uttered polite nothings to the spinsters.—'Tis but to carry wherever you go, that carte-blanche, and you may fill it up just as you please.—Time, I assure

you, never hangs with me; for amusement, unless varied, will soon be found insipid; and the best antidote for ennui, is the charm of variety.

To change the scene, I took a trip to Margate; there on the Pier, encountered all the beauties from the Stein,—visited the bathing rooms; and better for me I had not. Faith, I met with a heavy loss, in the upper room.—What did you lose?—Nothing less than my heart! and to one too, who thought it not worth keeping.—Cost me a prodigious sum, to learn her pedigree from her female attendant; but she was close,—merely said, her mistress was an invalid; when, by the bye, her eyes shone brighter than the brilliants that adorn the medal worn by the master of the ceremonies.

Her name, she informed me, was

Adamson, and that she was a rich heiress, and a ward in Chancery; probably to deter me from running away with her, which, I assure you, I felt not the least inclination to do; and with admirable gaieté de cœur, looked a sweet farewell.

By this time, Mordaunt was heartily tired of the loquacity of his new friend, and from the specimen he had received of his eloquence, wished the harangue ended. But there was no possibility of escape; and Hamilton, by way of tuition, completely inundated him. The presence of the Ladies procured him a short respite.—How has my cousin entertained you? demanded young Arrowsmith.—Mordaunt replied in terms the most flattering; though he thereby did violence to truth; for never had he been so

much disgusted, as he was with the unmeaning nonsense of Hamilton, who wishing to expose the ignorance of Alfred, more conspicuously showed his own.

Lady Arrowsmith was one of those imaginary youthful Mammas, who betray every thing but their age. The folly of fifteen was not lost in the maturity of forty; and she laughed, danced, and sung, with equal vivacity. Her eldest daughter Amelia was her complete counterpart; and for folly, vanity, and idle show, Emma, the youngest, proved herself in no wise their inferior.

The father of this promising family, in lamenting the errors of his offspring, had also to deplore those of the whole fashionable world. He saw no hopes of a reformation; and he bore with

calm content, the evils he could not remove. Amiable, generous, and lenient, he knew how to allow for infatuation, and pitied such, who suffered themselves to be deluded. The frank demeanor of Alfred pleased him; and he took a lively interest in his welfare: his spirited conduct toward Walter, displayed the independence of his character.

"And if," exclaimed he, "the son of the meanest commoner, I envy him the appellation of father; would my Henry were like him!"—And his bosom glowed. "From such a companion much may be gained; he will teach him that rank and fortune are no protection against honest indignation, when aroused by a sense of injury."—With strict attention he would contemplate the countenance of Al-

fred, and mark the passions as they successively rose. But it was not with the quick movement of impetuosity; the disposition of Mordaunt was placid, yet whatever affected him betrayed itself. His person was manly and graceful; his prepossessing air seemed more the effect of natural elegance than study. His complexion was dark, but animated, and added expression to his eyes. The engaging simplicity of youth received improvement by the intelligence that illumined each striking feature.

CHAPTER V.

The period now approached, when Helen was to leave school. With eager hope and a beating heart, she prepared for the residence of her father, flattered by the idea, that she was to assume the honors of his table. —The joy of expectation was hers; a new world opened to her view, bounded by creative imagination; and for real enjoyment, the wild caterer fancy presented to her youthful hopes that unsubstantial food, which, alas! was all she was doomed to taste: when an-

ticipation had performed her part, reality left the work unfinished.

She found in Seamore, the stern reprover. A perfect cynic, he rarely praised, condemned all, and complained of what really never existed. Disheartened by his austerity, she became listless; and for a refuge from upbraiding, practised the most artful cunning, which soon became so habitual, that the once candid and ingenuous mind of Helen found deception no longer painful.

A high sense of propriety, and a proportionate share of pride, were her best preservers from that youthful levity, the freedom of her situation exposed her to. The companion selected for her by her father, was one whose mind alone was garnished with the tinsel of ornamental learning; while

her heart remained a perfect void. Though many years the senior of Helen, she was incapable of affording that advice and instruction, a young woman on her first introduction to fashionable life requires.

Among her female acquaintance, Helen had an opportunity of observing many characters, but none sufficiently attracting for her to model her own by. Disappointed in the happiness she had promised herself, in the society of a parent intuitive affection had taught her to love, she looked for a resource within herself. With pain she beheld the heart of her father estranged from her. Too proud to sue for affection, undeservedly lost, she silently submitted to fate, and scorned the weakness of complaint. Rectitude forbad her condemning the conduct of

her father, and she resolved her bosom's secret should have no confidant. —Shall she, whose situation is that of an humble companion, from the unkindness of my father become exalted to the rank of my friend? weak, simple being! that must have some object to indulge its puerile affection.— And conscious dignity swelled her bosom. In proportion as she felt herself disliked, the stubbornness of her spirit increased, till it bordered on unfeeling obduracy. A miser of her grief, she lavished her smiles with that unmeaning prodigality, which often conceals a sad heart. The charms of her person exceeded those of her unfortunate mother; but she wanted that amiable weakness, that feminine softness, which accompanied the every action of Mrs. Seamore. There was a boldness and

singleness of character, which detracted much from the natural endowments of Helen, and rendered her less attractive than she would otherwise have been.

The presence of Alfred Mordaunt, in the present state of her mind, was the only event capable of affording her satisfaction; and the more so, as her father was absent from home.—" He is gone," said she, in answer to the inquiries of Alfred, " to the races; where he refused my accompanying him."—And with unusual petulance she spoke of the refusal, openly triumphing in the displeasure he would feel. To Alfred she used not disguise: he was her first and early companion. They now renewed those joys they had together shared, but with greater freedom; parental restraint was re-

moved, and the accommodating companion, the sage monitress, treated herself with like indulgence. The watchful guardian of wayward youth degenerated into the acquiescent, compliant sharer of uncontrolled indiscretion; or rather, the time spent in visits to absent friends would not have exposed her to the stings of self-reproach, had any real evil resulted from her want of circumspection. Happily for Helen, this was not the case; prudence restrained what passion would have dictated, and modesty gave birth to reserve, which is the best safeguard of virtue.

Nor were the intentions of Alfred less honorable; gratitude repressed those sentiments, which love and her charms had inspired.

Time thus agreeably spent, of course

flew swift, too swift for the young friends; and the unwelcome presence of Seamore awakened them from the new world of their own creation. Serious reality prevailed. Seamore welcomed Alfred with the cold civility of one, who conferring favors, expects the return of abject submission and degrading thanks.—But the spirit of Alfred submitted not to the exaction, though he was not deficient in that becoming respect and acknowledgment, which to a generous mind is the best return a person not servilely debased can make.

Seamore was chagrined at his unexpected arrival; and the more so, as it had happened during his absence. He examined the countenance of Helen, and fancied he discovered a something like satisfaction. This really

was the case; for Alfred possessed her esteem. He was the only being that regarded her with kindness; and flattered by his attention, she cherished the enlivening hope, that in him she had found a congenial mind, a bosom to repose confidence in; one, who would sympathize with the hardness of her destiny, and be lenient to those errors, her father treated with so much severity.

Her mind was ardent and glowing; no sooner disappointed in one object, than it sought resource in another. Despair she banished, as the bane of every social comfort; as the destroyer of that hope and anticipation, which are superior to reality. Disappointment had so damped the ardor of youthful expectation, that she could act with systematic consistency, nor

ever suffered a surprisal to betray her real sentiments. Early accustomed to practise disguise, her every action was the result of the most consummate hypocrisy. A very short period, to all appearance undeceived Seamore, in regard to her affection for Alfred. In public she treated him coldly, foreseeing a different conduct would deprive her of his company, which she prized too highly to risk its loss.

Seamore, who had now attained perfect ease, with his usual gaiety entertained his friends; among whom was the one he most prized, Barclay. The inexhaustible fund of good humor he possessed made him with every body a desirable companion; for as much as he repelled ennui, so did he promote conviviality.—Alfred, who was with him a great favorite, he un-

dertook to initiate in all the fashionable mysteries, protesting young Hamilton should quiz him no more. "For," said he, with friendly zeal, I will fully qualify you to equal him in polite knowledge."

Mordaunt smiled. To refuse his services would savor too much of self-sufficiency; therefore, thanking him for his solicitude, he professed himself highly indebted to his kindness. The eyes of Helen looked the approval she dared not pronounce; for in whatever concerned Alfred, she felt herself deeply interested; and to hear his feelings had been sported with, ever inflicted on her susceptible bosom a similar pang. She was prepared to dislike Hamilton; a dislike, that became strengthened on the first introduction of Walter. His familiarity, volubility,

and insignificant remarks, when contrasted with the insinuating address of Henry Arrowsmith, formed a difference too striking to escape observation. The generous warmth that betrayed his feelings plainly convinced the most transient beholder, that he was a stranger to dissimulation; and but for his unfortunate rencounter with Alfred, Helen had enthusiastically admired his amiable qualities. While she freely forgave an injury committed against herself, she could not so easily pardon one offered to Alfred.—Mordaunt, no stranger to her sentiments, made every return that gratitude could dictate. The suspicion of Seamore mortified him; and as he could not account for his motives, he felt the more hurt.

A tale now invaded his ear, that effectually disturbed his tranquillity.

The valet of Seamore, being reproved by him for neglecting his duty, replied in terms calculated to awaken every painful emotion; and for the first time, he heard the current report of his illegitimate birth.—"And must," said he, mentally, "obloquy and disgrace attend the poverty of my parents? must the fair fame of my mother become sullied, because indigent?"—He now called to mind several particulars, sufficiently ambiguous of themselves to wound his susceptible bosom.—"I am then, indeed, the son of Mr. Seamore. Helen is my sister.—no; impossible! I will not thus believe. Has not Mr. Barclay spoke of my father; talked of their friendship? But, oh! far more convincing proof, has not Mr. Seamore eloquently praised his virtues? —virtues, that taught him to exalt

his humble son. For this I'm vilified; as if protection was disgrace, as if indigence was a crime. Can I rebel against my fate? can I make fortune favor me? She's doomed me to dependence, a state I despise; for 'tis most bitter! but yet more bitter from invidious scorn! Debasing thought! Who is it contemns me? Those, whom circumstances should teach sympathy."

The arms of Alfred were folded, and his attitude such as bespoke the dejection of his mind. He had resolved, when opportunity offered, to question Seamore in regard to his father; and to learn, if possible, whether he, or his mother, was related to the deceased Mrs. Seamore. Fraught with this intention, he composed his features, not wishing to betray the anxiety he felt. Barclay, at that in-

stant, stood before him. Alfred, though greatly disappointed, was nevertheless compelled to appear pleased.

CHAPTER VI.

THOUGH the assumed composure of Alfred might deceive Barclay, it could not Helen, who was better acquainted with his feelings, but she appeared not to notice his distress, and each little tender soothing art became doubly acceptable.

Barclay, who had promised to meet some friends at the Clarendon Hotel, invited Alfred to accompany him. Helen, left to herself, spent the time in consulting with Mrs. Wright what

dress she should wear on the morrow, for a most momentous event was to take place—nothing less than her introduction to nobility!—The heart of Helen fluttered, it beat violently—the scene she was to witness was perfectly new to her, and in this respect, ignorance was bliss, for had she known the censure, envy, and invidious remarks she would be exposed to, she had shrunk from the scrutiny with the timidity of a novice, but happily for her, the shield of unconsciousness rendered each arrow shaftless.

It was not sufficient that she should be elegantly attired, but she must become that attire; what mattered her colours being well chosen, if she did not gracefully set them off?—but suppose poor Helen to be a perfect beauty, and her complexion too fair to please

the lover of a brunette, what would be the consequence? he would find fault with her——this is sufficient to shew the impossibility of pleasing every body.

Mrs. Wright exercised, to the utmost, her judgment, prudently thinking, any reflection on the bad taste of Helen would tend to her discredit. She found the task not so arduous as she at first had thought it, for whatever she pronounced right was implicitly believed to be such. After indirect compliments paid to her own judgment, she concluded with many fruitless wishes for the return of Miss Egerton—oh, she would soon have decided the matter, she is so very fashionable, and knows so well what becomes and what does not: out of pure gratitude Helen joined in the wish, and who

would have refused, when it was to promote their own good? at least, so she, like too many others, thought. What ornaments shall you wear next? enquired Mrs. Wright—oh, any, those, I cannot tell yet;—with this, she left the disconcerted Mrs. Wright to wonder at her indifference; is it possible, exclaimed she, speaking aloud, she sets no value on what would fill with rapture half the young ladies in the world;—her mind seems always occupied with something—love, I suppose; well, every one has their foible—some particular whim. Peace, woman, hold thy sacriligious tongue; dare not pollute the hallowed shrine of love; or foully debase that exalted passion by describing it to be a mere whim. The fact was, Helen caught a glimpse of Alfred, and to welcome him she forgot

dress, ornaments, and even the visit itself. Mordaunt was in high spirits, for Barclay, during their walk, had introduced his favourite subject, the law; 'twas a profession most consonant with the wishes of Alfred; he should be near Helen, enjoy her society, and share her converse; these were acquisitions not to be made light of. Do you not long for to-morrow, Helen! no, indeed, dear Alfred, I wish the formidable visit over before it is begun. I have been more tutored than when I first went to school; this must not be refused, and that must not be accepted, as if inclination was the last thing to be consulted. Alfred smiled; he had seen, 'tis true, but little of genteel life, yet that little had given him a disrelish for the whole. There is but one inducement that tempts me to go, said

Helen. The look which accompanied these words spared further explanation; Alfred could not mistake them, and he amply retaliated.

Dismissed from his memory was the tale that had so much distressed him; to give it encouragement was aiming at the root of his happiness. Strike! and each flourishing branch would be visited by the untimely blight; 'twas evident Helen returned his love—what then is required of me?—nothing, but to render myself worthy of her; Seamore might not always continue inflexible—the bare idea imparted rapture, and dispelled the gloom of his prospects.

Mrs. Wright, more profitably employed, had by this time adjusted matters to her utmost satisfaction: the toilet perapharnalia arranged, she

awaited the result, with the anxiety of one, who fears the voice of criticism shall pronounce that imperfect which they have considered perfect. Helen was delighted because Alfred said she looked admirable—now disregarded dress! now disregarded jewels! were you deemed valuable, treated with the respect of faithful allies, to whose assistance we attribute our victory.

Russel Square, reiterated the footman, and to Russell Square they were instantly whirled. Now shone in each avenue artificial day; bronze figures, as large as life, were placed in the several resting places, and afforded a light, at once the most brilliant.

Lady Arrowsmith, with pretty naivete, elegantly noticed her visitors, but more intent on viewing her own graceful figure, as she passed a mirror, eye-

ry other object became forgotten. Helen felt abashed, surrounded by numbers, yet there was not one with whom she was acquainted. Emma, and the Hon. Miss Arrowsmith were engaged in sprightly badinage, and too much occupied to observe her. Alfred, and even Seamore would have experienced the same neglect, but for the courtesy of the noble peer, who subscribed not so much to fashion, but what he could regard good manners. Henry was not of the party, and Walter did not make his appearance till a late hour; the instant he beheld Alfred, with his usual volubility, he enquired what new improvements he had made. A great many, replied Mordaunt. Name them.—The first is the art of killing time. How can that difficult science be attained?—In a very easy

manner; by exercising rationality. You are clever at hoaxing—will admit you as a pupil—profit, no doubt, by my instructions. Fred. said he, turning to a naval officer, this is the novice I made mention of. This was uttered in a whisper, sufficiently loud to call the mantling blood into the cheek of Alfred. The person whom Hamilton thus addressed, had well, by his age, demanded that respect, banished by his ridiculous affectation of youth. Captain O'Hara was your friend to-day and your inveterate foe to-morrow; unstable and changeable, no dependance could be placed on his professions, of which he, however, on all occasions made liberal use of; he considered himself competent to converse on any subject, and what he wanted in knowledge he made up with

self-sufficiency: his chief pleasure was derived from the society of the young, for to those of a maturer age he felt a decided aversion. Let no one suppose, by this declaration, that the Captain was so unnatural to dislike himself, but he was young (at least in his own conceit)—he knew the properties of every cosmetic, and could descant on their many virtues, with the facility of a mountebank, but this was select conversation, only reserved for particular occasions. A youthful Earl of seventeen did Alfred the honor of a familiar "how do;" but finding his mistake, had the politeness to walk away, muttering to himself, "thought knew him." To describe this fashionable meeting, I must candidly confess, is beyond my limited power; but if the reader is possessed of taste, some imperfect idea

may be formed, by what I shall observe.—Imagine above four hundred persons collected together; dressed in the first style of fashion: these occupy rooms brilliantly illuminated, and adorned with ornaments calculated to attract and dazzle the beholder. The company divides into various groups; where promiscuous meet, the young and old, the beau and belle. This prefers cassino, that conversation; one retires with important look, to reveal the anecdote of scandal; another singles out a confidant, to censure whatever may be found amiss in the amusement. By turns, chariots, horses, tandems, and even grooms engages.—Next, the noble art of boxing; the far more enviable science of driving, and the learned remarks thereon.—But, lo! all conversation stopped, the

supper rooms opened, and the whole company, sans ceremonie, entered. Now costliness, elegance, and profusion, combined to render the entertainment magnificent; and so all, but the partakers, would have pronounced it.

'Twas now the hour of morn; not that the company were annoyed by the obtruding ray, but such the tired senses proclaimed it to be. Silence and tranquillity was restored to the stately mansion; tapers, extinguished, no longer shed their cheerful blaze.—Lady Arrowsmith peacefully pressed her pillow, unconscious of the war she had waged; for this meeting, intended to regale friends, had created her many enemies. Some that were invited, departed offended; and others were

offended, because not invited. One labored to convince an incredulous hearer, that she had a prior engagement; so, consequently, could not break her word, had Lady A——— sent a card. Another, with equal sincerity, declared she had offended Lady A——— some time ago, by not attending her concert.

Seamore returned home in an ill humour. A slight altercation had ensued, which filled him with uneasy fears. The officious Captain, who professed himself at home in these matters, tendered his service as second. The whole was a political dispute, which Seamore wished to settle by recanting his opinion.—But to these terms his adversary would not agree; for, like many other politicians, while

he had a point to gain, he would not yield. He wished to fight, and Seamore did not.

Helen, retired to her chamber, indulged freely those thoughts that gaiety had suspended. For the first time, she felt herself disturbed about dress; with her own she was displeased, and sighed for this, and then for that. With the jewels of one, Helen included the attendant grace, that alone rendered them so brilliant; and with the becoming dress of another, she fancied an equal share of fascination would set her off.—Such is your tormenting power, Envy, such your magnifying qualities. How many, under your inspiration, wished to appear like Helen. —Now she wished for whatever she saw; not that the possession of them could impart to her any pleasure, but

she wished to be like others. And though averse to mixed or large parties, would have done violence to her own feelings, by joining them, merely because the Honorable Miss Arrowsmith and Lady Jane Cressy had enquired whether she had been invited to the Countess of Marchmont's rout, or to the Dowager Lady Darlington's concert. A desponding negative was the reply; and the confused Miss Seamore was compelled to own she should not attend the public breakfast of Mrs. Wallace, nor make one at Mrs. Lyson's pharo table.

Now present to her mental view was the dressing-room of Amelia. She contemplated the elegant little apartment, adorned with valuable prints; and admired the ingenious disposal of china vases, filled with artificial bou-

quets; to which were added large jars, containing rose-leaves, whose fragrant scent regaled the senses, and happily blended nature and art. Volumes of select authors were tastefully arranged on the gilded hanging shelves; these were disposed in a fanciful manner, ornamented with drapery silk curtains. —Her toilet was decorated in the most superb style; and small silk sofas, with gilded feet, finished the whole.

If show here attracted Helen, a something like emulation fired her bosom, when in the boudoir of Emma. There she beheld whatever could promote the arts and sciences. Numerous sketches of drawings, in an unfinished state, indicated that the fair artist had been interrupted. For should you doubt her ability, some casualty (such

as merit, with maternal care, contrives to encourage her diffident children) betrays her. You behold the inimitable flower, so perfectly delineated that you are filled with the pause of admiration. The exquisite tint, how correct! Nature, robbed of half her charms, retires abashed, and resigns the robe which conceals fiction; for the artist was not Emma—but ——. I had almost betrayed the secret; and to ennoble an obscure drawing-master, had detracted from the accomplishments of Emma Arrowsmith.

Alfred, the only one not disappointed with the amusement, forgot it had ever taken place. Promising himself no particular enjoyment, he escaped that mortification which attended the rest. He was near Helen, and to be

dissatisfied was impossible. An outrage committed against the sovereignty of love; too faithful to rebel, he yielded willing homage.

CHAPTER VII.

The ill humour of Seamore was not dissipated. By the morning, Barclay, surprised at his clouded aspect, with friendly solicitude enquired the cause; which, on being made acquainted with, left him no room for wonder. He knew the courage of his friend; and in that respect not more highly gifted, he could well account for his feelings.

At an early hour, the ticket of Captain O'Hara was sent; and himself, with due ceremony, ushered into

the presence of Seamore.—Sir, said he, I have waited upon you, about this duelling affair; what is your determination?—He concluded the question with a smile, which had well been spared, if it was his wish to conciliate the friendship of Seamore; who, in an accent ill corresponding with his looks, replied, The matter must take its course.—Oh! if you are determined, why nothing can be said. But I thought, perhaps, you might not like to fight, and that matters might be compromised. However, if a meeting takes place, I can only say, Captain O'Hara is your second.

Seamore, who imagined the Captain's words implied a something like reconciliation, altered his manner, and gave a very plain hint of his wishes to the intelligent O'Hara. "I

see how it is, my boy; you wish not to take your ground. Well, one is not always in the humour for that kind of work (though O'Hara never once skulked from the sport); and if you reveal your mind to me, you shall not complain of Frederic O'Hara. I'll manage the business, so as to preserve your honor, which you may safely trust to the keeping of O'Hara. There never was yet one of my country, that ever proved a coward; and I hope, I may not be the first. Eternal disgrace! to refuse a challenge. No, no; there is no man can say that of O'Hara."

This was consolation, indeed, to the man he was encouraging to make a refusal. But Seamore, though he did not relish the remark, chose to let it pass unnoticed, at least till his point

was gained. His wish he imparted to O'Hara. He raised obstacles so formidable, that completely discouraged Seamore; who now lamented the confession extorted from him, since it seemed of no avail.—"Well," continued the Captain, "I'll see what can be done. But Harry Melcomb is a spirited fellow; and loves not your apologies. For, says he to me, once before, when I applied to him in the peace-making way, "O'Hara," says he, "I believe you know my courage." —"Indeed, my dear boy, I do." This was my reply, and a true one, to be sure.—"Well, O'Hara," says he, for he never calls me Captain, "you are a man of valor, and understand what honor is. I hope I do. For my own part, I consider an apology balm sufficient for the greatest

wound that can be inflicted. But there are the invidious; who, if it pleases them, will report the apology was of my making. Now this remark stands good in your case; so if he will not make friends, you must prepare to fight. Mind you are in readiness; lest it should be said, Captain O'Hara deceived a man, and prevented an honorable duel being fought."

When the Captain departed, Seamore and Barclay took ample justice for the silence they were compelled to observe. The character of O'Hara demonstrated itself.—Captain O'Hara had quitted the navy, because, as he said, he was ill used, being only a captain; whereas he ought to have been elevated to the rank of Admiral. As a something is required to amuse a mind out of employ, O'Hara chose the

plaything fashion. This bauble was not quite so harmless, as he at first had thought it.

The Captain's expences kept not pace with his income; and in proportion as the one diminished, the other increased. Each fresh difficulty revived his complaint of ill usage; and again he lamented that he was not an Admiral. Drove to many a distressing exigency, he resolved on retaliation; and buoyed up others with the hopes that had deluded him. But with this advantage; whilst his cost nothing, theirs he contrived to make contribute to his support. He affected to possess great interest; and many an inexperienced youth, panting for naval preferment, was his willing dupe.—When this resource failed, as fail it did, he had recourse to another, yet more lu-

crative. He kept the best company, gave the best wine, and was allowed to possess the best taste. His knowledge was universal: his fund of wit inexhaustible; his talent at hoaxing so happy, that he never felt himself at a loss to entertain his friends. Conscious of his powers, cards were prohibited, as the bane of conversation, the promoter of dissension, and the disturber of harmony. But yet, as it is sometimes necessary to chuse a lesser evil to avoid a greater, cards were occasionally admitted; but this was, when O'Hara found the keener sense of man, benumbed by that spirit which rather clogs than vivifies, and perception. no longer stimulated by interest, yielded to the powers of unconsciousness. His friends lost with a good grace, that is to say, they were not

sensible of their loss. For many had been heard to enquire of O'Hara, how they had passed the night? adding, complaisantly, Thanks to his conviviality, they could not tell.—A striking proof of their being well entertained.

By this happy art of preserving good humour, O'Hara won immense sums, without the drawback of quarrels and execrations, so profusely uttered in general by the loser. He had none such mortifications to encounter; and if his motives were so laudable, who could envy his good success? To preserve unanimity among his friends was surely praise-worthy, as cherishing the rites of hospitality. But some there were, who placed their own invidious construction on the Captain's actions, and roundly asserted he used foul play.

This assertion some believed, while others believing, affected not.

O'Hara's intimates found no difficulty in accounting for so black a charge. It sprung from the chagrin of the loser, and was an effect that might be expected from such a cause. This well-intended vindication was insufficient to appease the Captain's wounded honor, and in its support he challenged an host.—But they, too strongly attached to one weapon to trust another, refused attending him. This concession wiped off the foul stain, and the Captain was restored to the good opinion of all those he valued; his sword, as a faithful friend, was reserved for another occasion.

Barclay and Seamore, all impatient, awaited the return of O'Hara. At length he came. Seamore read the

result in his countenance, and demeaned himself accordingly.—But I tell you, my dear boy, there is not the least necessity for all that talk. Peace is made, upon which I congratulate you. I had a vast deal of trouble to quiet Melcomb; nothing would suit him but battle. Then, says I, you are not the Melcomb, I so often admired. At this he looked himself again; and O'Hara took advantage of his pacific mood, concluded the armistice, and will drink a bottle of wine with you, by way of ratification.

Immediately the requisition of O'Hara was complied with; and agreeable to his wishes, he was considered a welcome guest at Brunswick Square. This was what he anticipated, when he proffered his service to Seamore. Melcomb was his particular friend,

and he knew his influence.—Alfred attracted the attention of O'Hara, and he lost no opportunity to conciliate his esteem. He was inexperienced, and might be easily persuaded. In the course of a long conversation, he drew from the unguarded Mordaunt, his real situation. A bite of the nail, indicative of sympathy, was all the reply O'Hara made. Here was a mistake: he had thought Alfred Seamore's son, and, consequently, the heir to a large fortune. With infinite address he concealed his disappointment; for still he was not devoid of hope, his means might not be as slender as they really were. What profession did Seamore intend him for?—He was undetermined; but the law had once been mentioned.—The law, to be sure, is a genteel thing enough; but the navy

for promotion and honor.—I have heard, replied Alfred, without the aid of interest, the hope of promotion has often proved delusive.—No such thing, my young friend; 'tis a slur on the navy, which I wish to remove. 'Tis said, to deter aspiring youth from becoming heroes. No man of merit ever yet complained of not meeting with preferment.—I have heard you, Sir, retorted Alfred, with more candor than discretion. But as it was paying the Captain an indirect compliment, if he chose to interpret the observation favorable, he felt disposed to let it pass off.—I have had the honor of serving in the navy these twenty-five years; and you may suppose I know a little what service is (oh! believe I do); and all I can say, is, were my time to come over again,

Frederic O'Hara would prove his attachment to the dear little navy. These scars, I believe, show I was no fugitive: no, nor am I to this day. And where is the man, who will say so of Captain O'Hara?—With this he brandished his sword, to the great dismay of Alfred; and elevated his voice, as if in reality defending the imaginary insult offered his honor, which like the tender sensitive shrunk from exposure, and had never yet been seen. It inspired his tongue, but failed to animate his bosom.

In a most insinuating accent, for now passion had subsided, he persuaded Alfred to become a hero. The navy, the navy! and for promotion trust to the interest of Frederic O'Hara. This is no mere flimsy promise to deceive you; I pledge my word for its fulfil-

ment, a word never yet forfeited. I am an Irishman! (this confession, his Hibernian brogue, had spared the ingenuous Captain) and there never was yet, one of my country, who proved himself deaf to the voice of glory.— Alfred knew not what reply to make, wavering between inclination, and the many advantages O'Hara held out; for he had yet to learn, that the Captain was so prone to boasting, that like a favorite vice, he continually indulged it. When alone with Seamore, he renewed the conversation; and much to the Captain's satisfaction, he listened with pleasure. Never to let slip a good opportunity was his constant maxim; and a vague hint was dropped, that the disinterested Captain being so long out of the navy, his influence, perhaps, had subsided.—

Well, should his surmise prove true, he knew a person (but that, to be sure, was not like himself); he would expect a douceur.—He paused, for to talk about pecuniary affairs was most disagreeable to O'Hara.—Seamore understood him; and by his reply, made the Captain's heart at perfect ease.

Helen, who heard the subject discussed, retired to her chamber, the better to give vent to her feelings.—And Alfred will leave me, exclaimed she, in an agony of distress. Can he be so cruel, so faithless? 'Tis by the advice of that odious O'Hara; would he had never seen him. The idea no doubt pleases my father, and he will do every thing to promote the departure of Alfred.

Mrs. Wright, who just entered, was surprised to find Helen bathed in tears.

—What can thus afflict you, Miss Seamore? said she, in a compassionate tone.—Her question confused Helen; and her reply confirmed the suspicions of Mrs. Wright. Well, thought she to herself, I was not much out t'other day, when I suspected her to be in love; she is surely, but I did not think with him.

Applauding her sagacity, Mrs. Wright retired. The discovery she had made was confined to her own bosom; at least, till she knew it was most to her advantage to lspeak out. Mrs. Wright was a well-meaning wo man; and would not injure another, without it benefited herself. From the reserve of Helen, she had little to hope—But she will not be so haughty, when she is acquainted with what I know. I will give an hint; it shall

not amount to a threat; 'twill sufficiently explain my meaning.

Nothing delights the vulgar so much as the possession of a secret, more particularly when it involves the peace of one they dislike. Mrs. Wright conjured up imaginary affronts, for the pleasure of telling Helen what she knew; and when the disclosure was made, seemed to breathe fresh life.

Helen, more pained from the consequence she assumed, than from her knowledge, affected the utmost indifference, and indulged unusual petulance, to show her contempt of the hint.

Alfred, wholly engaged with his own happy prospect, was some time before he discovered the change her lovely countenance had undergone. She seemingly avoided him.—Had he

offended her? The idea was insupportable; and as Helen expected, he entreated an explanation.—Your solicitude is feigned, said she, indignantly. Her words astonished Alfred, who could not account for their meaning.—What has displeased you, dear Helen? You are too generous to harbour resentment without a cause. In what have I been so unfortunate as to incur your displeasure?—Your words, returned Helen, like your professions, have no meaning. Be sparing of both; for neither interest me, I assure you.—There was a time, Helen——There was a time, Alfred, she interrupted, when you declared you could not survive a separation; but——Here emotion rendered her words inaudible; and what was intended to show indifference, convinced Alfred

how dear he was to her. Flattered by the discovery, he attempted to soothe the lovely mourner; but every art had failed; even eloquence itself had not produced the harmony, as did his assurance of remaining at home.

The beauteous eyes of Helen regained their usual lustre; but when she recollected her father, the gloom of thought, like the threatening cloud, portended an approaching storm.

Mordaunt, to dissipate her anxiety, endeavoured to make impossibilities appear possible. He reminded her, that in Barclay he should always find an advocate. It is his wish that I should become an Attorney; and he will not lose sight of his own interest to oblige O'Hara.—Helen sighed. I know, said she, the positive disposi-

tion of my father; if he is resolved, what can be done?—Alfred made light of what plunged him in the greatest perplexity; besides, he had so readily acquiesced, that to recant would appear strange, and perhaps might avail him nothing.

His vacation over, he petitioned to return to college. Seamore, astonished at the application, readily gave him permission. To-night, said he, you are expected to attend Lady Arthur Bocannon's concert.—Alfred answered in the affirmative. The engagement was not banished from his memory, but he wished to avoid meeting the Captain; however, as that was not practicable, he resolved to conceal his repugnance.

The concert began by a grand overture in the great room, which was

succeeded by a delightful concerto. Walter Hamilton played several overtures, to the delight of the whole assembly. The amateurs were perfectly charmed; and those who wished to be thought such, affected to feel the same satisfaction. The Honorable Henry Arrowsmith and Miss Stella Bloxam executed a duet with great science, and obtained universal applause. What a group of happy countenances at this harmonic meeting! Discord was banished; the exile was only removed to the bosoms of the guests. But as he was concealed, his presence disturbed not their festivity. Many, who praised the performers, had the address to excuse themselves by saying, they wished not to appear singular; and approved, to avoid the imputation of envy. Censure, dis-

pleased with the unsatisfactory meal, winged her flight to the masked ball of Lady Felicia Arundel. This scene was a blaze of splendor, taste, and elegant invention; here the arts and sciences flourished, and produced the happiest effect. The drawing and other rooms were converted into a smooth enamelled lawn; and artificial sky was exquisitely delineated; and the light that illuminated the beautiful spot, appeared to be shed from many stars, which were ingeniously dispersed. A partly obscured moon emitted the most brilliant rays, to the great admiration of numerons fashionable spectators. A scent, at once the most odoriferous and reviving, regaled the senses, seemingly exhaled from rare and curious exotics. These filled delicate filagree pedestals, supported by golden eagles.

Fashion, variable goddess, now made her appearance: at the sight of her, each enthusiastic votary renewed their vows. A golden incensory, blazing with incense, consecrated her shrine. Smiling, she witnessed the offering, and displayed her magic power. Supplicants were seen, flocking from all quarters; their errand, to borrow her name. Flattered, she granted their request; regardless of the aukward imitations they represented of her.—An ill-dressed female proudly walked along, vainly exhibiting her apparel; it was pronounced elegant, for it bore the name of fashion.—A gentleman, arrayed in the garb of a coachman, excited no wonder among the multitude, for they were all acquainted with fashion. A titled youth, and a celebrated pugilist, were seen amicably

walking together, dressed exactly alike. None but those who had seen fashion, could have told the difference. The last hope of an illustrious family was wasting precious time in listening to the edifying instructions of a mail coachman; the subject a most important one—the noble art of driving.

Fashion again walked forth: to follow her, the old forgot infirmity; the young, their duty; the rich, good sense; the poor, their finances; the rigid, austerity; the mechanic, industry; and the artisan, his laudable avocations. All ranks and degrees attended her footsteps; to ape her robe, to imitate her bonnet, and to mispend their money.

Fools! idiots! exclaimed wisdom, stopping the mad career of all.—But the rich listen to me, said the goddess,

in persuasive accent.—A reluctant compliance was yielded, and she eloquently harangued the giddy multitude. Convinced of their folly, they promised implicit obedience to her sage dictates. Dismissed with a suitable reprimand, they departed to wage eternal war with fashion, whom they accused as the primary cause of their indiscretion.

The whimsical goddess, to indulge her caprice, once more sallied forth. Invectives and execrations were uttered by those who had formerly professed themselves her votaries. Grieved at their maledictions, the lucid drop fell from her lovely eyes.—Ungrateful mortals, said she, if you accuse me of your ruin, must I make known how many individuals I have raised from obscurity, by gracing with my name their

tasteless performances? Under my sanction, how much deformity has been concealed! the well-contrived robe, the disguising mantle, with other valuable articles, all, all devised through my contrivance. Tell me, oh! when ungrateful, did labor and ingenuity meet with such liberal encouragement, as since my prevalence? One fair follower furnishes employ for dozens of you. Your wives, your daughters, your sons, no longer remain idle; but for me, you would pine in indigence, apply in vain for support, and sink unpitied into obscurity.—She ceased, and from their sight her magic influence withdrew.

Eclat! a new-born bantling, by folly reared, attended the goddess in her banishment.—The masks were entertained by the observations of a

moralist, who set himself up as a reformer of men and manners. Charmed by his eloquence, the listening crowd admired.—Sophist! exclaimed a magician, spare your rhetoric, or direct it to yourself.—At that instant, by an inimitable contrivance of mechanism, the scene changed to the house of the reformer. Those public evils, he so loudly inveighed against, were there practised with impunity. The moral turpitude he complained of might be seen by the discerning eye, but with this difference, evil, confined from circumstance, could not extend to the utmost her dangerous length; partly confined by restraint, the monster appeared not so hideous; but the eyes of the public were opened, and when they heard a declaimer vehemently using the language of rectitude,

they expected to find him what, by exposure, he had really proved.

A scene of universal confusion now prevailed, implements of industry strewed the ground, and the children of the poor were converting them into playthings, to shew they had no further use for them. With looks of deep dejection foreign musicians were breathing forth the saddest symphonies; behind the gloomy train slowly walked the hapless mendicant, in vain imploring from another that which was wanted for themselves. The beggar sighed, for near him passed a lady elegantly attired; her costly mantle and gaudy ornaments bespoke plenty; with feeble voice he solicited charity; in granting his request, her mantle fell aside, and discovered clothes old, plain, and unfashionable; with stupid wonder, the

beggar gazed. Fool, idiot, exclaimed Minerva in a reproving voice; disappointment will ever attend those who go by outward appearance; for know, though we may externally subscribe to fashion, internally we are still the same. Fashion is harmless while she affects only our dress. All eyes were turned to the back ground, where stood the banished goddess, wishing, but afraid to advance; at this all ranks, one and all encouraged her approach, unanimously proclaiming her the patroness of thousands—children lisped her eulogy, and the aged expressed their gratitude. A musical composition, designed and adapted for the occasion, was then tastefully executed—it celebrated the return of fashion. The whole concluded with a rustic dance; the rich selected partners from the

poor, sweetly figurative that the poor could not exist without the rich, and that they in turn are indebted to the humble for their amusements; the one, from their superfluity, afford the others a comfortable subsistence, and by employing them to assist their pleasures, give laudable encouragement to industry.

Lady Felicia Arundel, in happiest mood, had planned this elegant amusement, which for taste, magnificence, and picturesque scenery, stood unrivalled. Her Ladyship, as Fashion, was deservedly restored to general favor, received the meed of praise she so highly merited. The chaste idea recommended by novelty made due impression on every susceptible bosom, and reflected honor on its fair promoter. Helen and Alfred were

perfectly delighted—Seamore was unusually pleased—the complaisant Barclay could not be otherwise.

In the morning an unexpected pleasure awaited Helen—a card signifying Miss Egerton would be at home that evening was presented to her, and she, all expectation, proposed calling at Park Lane. Miss Egerton had returned to town with her friend, who was happily now in a convalescent state. Cicelia Granger, the fair object of the compassionate Ermina's solicitude, had suffered from a long and painful illness, during which she received every attention that friendship could bestow. With returning health enabled fully to estimate the treasure she was in possession of, she proved not unmindful of her tender nurse; and wholly influenced by gratitude, refused

residing, as she had heretofore, with her brother in Arlington Place. Accordingly, card parties, musical meetings, and select entertainments, were thought necessary by Miss Egerton, to dissipate the langour of the fair invalid, who generally retired from the war of tongues, even more indisposed than benefited by the inefficacious remedy.

Seamore, out of respect to Miss E. accompanied Helen; insincere congratulations were uttered by each, Miss E. was truly happy, and Mr. S. was consumately delighted to hear of her return; this friend and that friend had enquired after her, and this gentleman and that gentleman had looked unusually out of spirits—in return, the beaus and belles at Worthing were so delightfully out of humour on finding

the—oh, but I shall make you vain. Well, I'll tell you, interrupted Miss Granger, they called you dashing, elegant, witty, interesting, and by every name calculated to promote festivity. Do not believe half, said Miss Egerton, in a lively voice. Of all the charming appellations, replied Seamore, if I could with truth lay claim to interesting, I—a most provoking pause prevented the important conclusion. Well, whatever is, is best; it might not have produced such an effect on Miss Egerton.

During all this time the disregarded Helen was compelled to remain silent, and perhaps would a much more unconscionable while, had not Miss Egerton, probably to hide her embarrassment, said—Oh dear, Miss Seamore, I had almost forgotten you—how are

you, my dear girl? Helen, piqued at the neglect with which she was treated, replied in terms far from conciliating, and on her introduction to Miss Granger did not prepossess that young lady much in her favour, Helen was not fashionable, and her sincerity must be excused. Now, as on every other occasion, she wished for Alfred; he, said she, mentally would not let me stay in a room full half an hour without speaking; her indignation had nearly betrayed itself, but for the overawing presence of her father, whose keen observation nothing escaped. At the conclusion of the visit he solicited the friendly assistance of Miss Egerton to polish and bring out his graceless daughter. With unfeigned pleasure Miss E. undertook the arduous task, and again renewed her visits at

Brunswick Square; in most of them she was accompanied by Miss Granger—the gentle Cecilia, when thoroughly acquainted with Helen, found much to admire, and contracted a friendship the most sincere, which, much to her satisfaction, met with a mutual return. Helen, to a casual observer, appeared haughty, reserved, and uncourteous. Denied in early youth that tender maternal care which softens while it expands the mind, her sentiments were, many of them, fraught with error, and tinctured with boldness. Accustomed to think for herself, she often judged by a false criterion, and was more entitled to sympathy than censure. The brother of Miss Granger saw and admired the beauteous Helen. His passion, which daily betrayed itself, filled her with a thousand tormenting fears.

She trembled for Alfred; and what before had afflicted her, was now her only consolation—his departure. He would be spared anxiety; but know, dear youth, said she, mentally, as he bid her a reluctant adieu, I am unalterable, no circumstance shall change my love.

Filled with grief, she sought her chamber; and there freely indulged the tears she had concealed, not to affect him for whom they flowed.—In the love of Granger, she saw a mighty blow aimed at her peace. Should he appeal to her father, who undoubtedly would favor his suit, what had she to hope? She dare not avow her preference for Alfred; and if she did, of what avail?—But her fears were imaginary; for the reserve, she on every occasion manifested, was sufficient to

deter Granger from declaring himself. Delicacy induced him to conceal a passion, that it was too evident met with no return. His considerate conduct spared her, as well as himself.—The amiable Cecilia, no stranger to his sentiments, shared all his disappointment. She strongly suspected Helen had no heart to bestow, a conclusion her reserve seemed to strengthen.—Since the departure of Alfred, her melancholy increased; a violent depression seized her spirits, and struggling to subdue her emotion, she suffered the more.—Conscious of the watchful eye, with which her father regarded her, she affected gaiety foreign to her heart.

Mrs. Wright strongly suspected the real cause of her inquietude, but dared not give utterance to her suspicions;

for Helen possessed that true dignity, which no circumstance could lessen. She repressed with pride all approaches toward familiarity, which begets confidence; and unlimited confidence, placed in a menial, is the resignation of liberty. Respect vanishes; and the consciousness of possessing a secret, imparts the insolence of power, which brooks not to the submission of a servant. It soars at equality; and that equality, she resolved no inducement should tempt her to allow.—Therefore, she patiently bowed to the decree of fate; and, unpitied, passed many a melancholy hour.

The knowledge of being mutually regretted, dispelled not her painful anxiety. Alfred had latterly behaved in a manner the most reserved; and if he really felt any affection, suffered it

not to appear. Yet, that caution might have been practised, to deceive her father. Prudence had suggested it, and she admired his self-command.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE same scenes of gaiety, the same elegant amusements, diverted the attention of Seamore. Helen, sad among the gay, like a miser surrounded by plenty, enjoyed it not.

She had heard so often, what is called the language of love, that it affected her heart, with the interest excited by a twice read story. Her inflexibility offended Seamore in various ways; sometimes her refusal disappointed his avarice, which might have been gratified by her acceptance

of a splendid alliance; or his bosom felt that pang, experienced by those who, meanly weak, attach importance to what is called titles of honor, while honor itself they disregard.—'Tis like extolling the fountain, and contemning the source.

Among the numerous suitors of Helen, the Earl of Thor was most distinguished by her father. This young nobleman, boasting of antiquity, fortune, and every other requisite, was considered by Seamore most desirable. He not only favored his suit, but commanded Helen to do the same.

'Twas now, that she felt nothing was too hard to perform for Alfred.—The fearful timidity that disheartened her on the first discovery of Granger's love, seemed totally vanished.—Donald Ferguson, with all the ardor of a

youthful lover, strove to gain her affection. But in vain he wooed, in vain he vowed eternal constancy, contemned all titles, save the one to which he aspired. With energy, he set at nought the influence of wealth, swore and swore his passion could only terminate with existence, and protested that existence would be either prolonged or shortened, according to the hopes she gave.

Helen, unmoved by entreaty or menace, with cold indifference heard his protestations of not surviving her coldness; she even left him, at the awful moment of impending life and death, —The fatal period of indecision!—in the sight of a most dangerous temptation, a soft, cool, flowing stream, whose mocking calmness seemed to deride the tempest within.

The youth advanced; his mind was fixed, full bent on dire destruction.—He approached!—At that crisis, so big with his fate, his reverie was disturbed by a certain guest, called self-love. Away vanished those dear cherished phantoms of untried heroism. Donald gazed at the river, yet moved not; withheld, perhaps, by sublunary considerations; or whether, like a second Narcissus, the reflection of his own image in the water filled him with self-love, I cannot pretend to say.—And yet the youth had, or thought he had, another powerful motive to bind him to life, more than the love of life itself.—Suicide was the effect of mean cowardly fear, more than real courage. Was it fortitude to fly from danger, he had not the strength to encounter? 'Twas no merit, to sacrifice life for an

unfeeling, unworthy being!—And applauding himself for resisting what he never intended to perform, he beheld with tolerable composure the unchanged countenance of Helen. Resolving, as he said, to conquer her obduracy, he trusted to the effect of time; and if the unwearied attention of a vacant mind can be dignified with the name of constancy, then was Donald Ferguson the most constant of swains.

Finding no persuasions, not even those of her father, could induce Helen to grant his suit, he retired in the utmost despair; leaving the cruel fair one delighted at her emancipation, and as the captive just released, she hailed her freedom, unheeding the stern looks and angry menaces of the disappointed Seamore. The young Earl, he had hoped, would have conquered the aver-

sion so often expressed by Helen, to change her situation; and why she should thus determine was a mystery he could not elucidate: for something within whispered her home was not very inviting; her only motive, then, must be love; but for whom?—this question he could not answer. Mrs. Wright was closely interrogated—she gave no satisfactory account, all seemed mere vague conjecture. Helen guarded so well her secret that it was impenetrable; yet, if she might venture to judge from appearance, her spirits had become unusually exhilirated on the first arrival of Alfred, and as unaccountably depressed since his departure. This was something like conviction to the mind of Seamore, yet he hoped the suggestion might prove fallacious, for the bare idea conveyed to his bosom

the utmost anguish. Relaxing from his former severity, he sought to ingratiate himself into the confidence of Helen, trusting to an unguarded moment for the betrayal of her secret; but she, suspicious of the motives for a change so extraordinary, was doubly guarded, and defeated all his designs. Completely baffled, he became restless and uneasy, filled with a thousand fears, yet dreading the confirmation of them—forming schemes, which were as quickly abandoned, each displeasing him, for they offered no hopes of success. Rather than doubt his own sagacity, he suspected the integrity of Mrs. Wright; she had been bribed to secrecy. The whole mystery now seemed developed, and Seamore wondered at his own blindness. I must be more vigilant for the future, said

he; but vain each stratagem. Helen made no betrayal. Through the introduction of Miss Egerton, she had received cards of introduction from half the fashionables in the metropolis. Bankrupt Ladies and needy Countesses eagerly courted her company; she lost with the cheerfulness of a novice, and amply compensated for the degradation they suffered by the unequal association; besides the girl had acquired something like notoriety—an Earl had paid his addresses to her. Seamore, the only one not pleased at this initiation, because it was attended with so much expence, began to complain. Miss Egerton represented its necessity, and overruled his objections. Instead of checking, she encouraged the extravagance of Helen, thus secretly revenging herself on Seamore,

whose deception excited her resentment; and but for the advantage she expected to reap from Helen, she had withdrawn her visits from Brunswick Square. Together they went a shopping—together they paid morning visits—together graced evening parties.

Helen, by this time, had acquired the fashionable art of spending money, made continual purchases of what she did not want, and contracted debts without knowing she did so. The milliners exhibited the dress of Lady A———; would Miss Seamore have one similar?—Yes, was the expected answer.—Should it be trimmed, in like manner? Who could refuse? Not Helen. And more especially, when attended by a chaperone, like Miss Egerton.—Nor were these the only temptations to which the pliable

Helen was exposed. From the auction-rooms, she stopped at the jeweller's. 'Twas unfortunately that very night, the masked ball of Lady Waldegrave. A new set of jewels had been ordered by her Ladyship; the eyes of Helen were rivetted on them.—At what are you so earnestly gazing, enquired Miss Egerton, with insinuating accent.—Those beautiful ornaments, replied Helen.—Her answer was attended with a loud laugh.—Well, said her prudent companion, cannot you have the same?—This hint was thankfully received by the obsequious tradesman; and now, persuasion was powerfully applied. The vulnerable Helen yielded; payment was forgotten, or only remembered to be disregarded.

Time no longer loitered with her; early rising was entirely exploded;

'twas a plebeian custom, perfectly canaillish!—Toilet duty next engaged; the Park, Bond Street, Kensington Gardens, and other places of fashionable resort, employed the hours till dinner. In the way home, cards of ceremony were left at the residence of every fashionable; and so much time taken up, that hardly a moment was left for the Ladies to re-dress, before they could appear at the dinner-table, —Either a ball, a concert, or rout, concluded the night, or rather, beguiled till morning.

Though the amusements were unwearied and unceasing, they could not banish Alfred from her memory. He was the continual object of her thoughts. —Did he remember her with tenderness? Alas! she feared not. Perhaps Alfred had seen another.—And

with the ever attendant anxiety of true love, she indulged a thousand groundless fears. Surmise almost amounted to certainty; and fancying Alfred inconstant, she uttered incessant complaints.—Though his adieus were unusually warm and tender, she recollected a something bordering on coldness. Acquainted with her weakness, he had become indifferent, and slighted her sincere attachment.—To cherish this idea, was indeed depriving herself of every consolation; for not even gaiety, with all its magic powers, could make her prove unmindful of Mordaunt. She longed for his return; dreading, yet wishing, for a confirmation. And should he really not love me? said she, with energy, I feel I should be wretched for life. Yet he has told me so; but his professions are

insincere, he is faithless, fickle, changeable.

And at that moment, Helen really thought so. Offended with his deception, she determined on retaliation; she would discard him, banish tenderness, and gain the victory over love. Vain boast! Helen, like a youthful warrior, fired with enthusiastic ardor, had in imagination performed prodigies. But she little knew her own heart; its whisperings deceived her; petulance she mistook for resolution, and resentment for indifference.

Now had Granger been present, Helen, less frigid, had——What?—Still refused; for with undivided affection she loved Alfred. These were only the delusions of that deceitful passion, which oft persuades the infatu-

ated votary to affect indifference when most enamoured.

Miss Egerton, not a little surprised at the pensive mood of Helen, rallied her with vivacity on the occasion.—The poor child, said she, is troubled with that prevalent disease, the vapours. Let me prescribe an airing for you.—Silence was consent, and Miss Egerton gave orders accordingly.

CHAPTER IX.

ALFRED found his friends at the university less turbulent; the affair of Arrowsmith established his courage, and obtained him respect. Not but what the pointed innuendo and malicious sarcasm oft invaded his ear, and called the glow of resentment into his cheek.

Youth is the period, when the passions are warm and unrestrained. Alfred saw no reason why he should resign his opinion, because it happened not to coincide with that of a Lord, or

applaud ignorance, because it assumed the semblance of wit. Pliability of temper he despised, and scorned the advantage resulting therefrom. He was no favorite with those, who consider title sufficient privilege for the indulgence of every extravagant whim. He contributed not to their vices; but condemned, instead of justifying them, rightly concluding that the parasite of a Lord proves the tyrant of many.

Young Arrowsmith, careful of again wounding the spirit he admired, had to contend with the opposition of many. The change of his sentiments were ascribed to all but the real cause; it was whispered, the friends understood each other. Henry, with the gaiety that affluence inspires, laughed at their witticisms: not so Alfred. Pained and mortified, he heaved the

mournful sigh, and uttered the sad complaint, too often extorted from the dependent. In large seminaries, the sons of misfortune rarely escape contumely; their passions are expected to become subservient to their interest; and if too proud to brook every indignity, susceptibility is their torment, genius is clogged, and the object of mistaken elevation becomes degradingly humiliated.—Since pride, rank noxious weed, is suffered to take root, and contaminate the fairest productions of nature, wonder not at the sycophant, the dissembler, whose deceitful language, like false gloss, conceals imperfection.—Wonder not, that honor is held in derision, or only known to be despised. Start not, if generous sentiments prove the disguise of base venality.

The period now arrived, when Alfred was to bid adieu to College. He hailed with rapture his deliverance; ingenuously confessing, not from the Muses, but their votaries, he cheerfully parted; for, said he, the path of science is most inviting, and possessed of abundance, to satisfy the craving of imagination; but few who knew her purveyors would partake a repast, either savory or unsavory, according to the rank of the guest.

The human mind, by a happy elasticity, is ever seeking for a resource, and thereby prevented from dwelling continually on one subject. The diversity of thought lessens grief, and directs the attention to that which is pleasing. Alfred recollected Helen anticipated his meeting with her, and enjoyed far greater bliss than reality

can bestow; the exquisite thrill of untasted pleasure, the resistless charm of expectation were his. With the rapture of a voluptuary, imagination feasted, rioted at the banquet, where each intoxicating draught defied poor sober reason thus to aspire. Care, bitter ingredient, annoyed no more, and Alfred felt supremely blest. When the feelings are attuned to harmony, discord itself sounds melodious, and an incident may be truly estimated according to the frame of our mind. Alfred, disposed to be pleased with every thing, if offended, had forgot his usual tenacity, but as that was not the case, without impediment or delay he reached Brunswick Square. Seamore, who in his ideal picture of happiness, had either been forgotten, or cast in the back ground, was the

very first person he encountered, and Helen, contrary to his wishes, the last.

Miss Egerton protested he had grown quite out of knowledge; Barclay was of the same opinion, and all but Helen had something to say. Alfred and she interchanged looks—they were most significant, and eloquently full of meaning.

'Twas near dinner time, and the arrival of company granted the liberty Alfred so ardently desired. Helen approached, the secret of one now became a divided trust; order was forgotten, and the occurrence of yesterday related before that of last month, to which it referred. Analogy was considered unimportant—and who can blame youthful narrators for proving unmindful of past events, when the

present alone attracted? Memory opened wide her scroll; the most insignificant trifle was recorded, and possessed sufficient power to interest—last of all, Alfred enquired, had Captain O'Hara called lately; the enquiry was made in a hesitating tone. The countenance of Helen expressed that reluctance with which we express disagreeable news, but yet, as the denying of what is a fact, can neither increase or lessen its authenticity, she frankly confessed that the Captain was not only a constant guest, but a great favourite with her father. Alfred made no reply: in O'Hara he beheld an enemy; one whom he had converted into such. Should he separate him from Helen! he shrunk from the idea —and Helen, unknowingly, sighed. His bosom heaved responsive, in si-

lence they gazed at each other. Oh! Helen, at length, exclaimed Alfred, if I lose you I should call fortune unkind, were she to elevate me to the rank of an admiral! I am very unhappy. No, Alfred, you are only ambitious. Further recrimination was prevented by the approach of Walter Hamilton. Mr. Mordaunt, said he, shaking the hand of Alfred, I am overjoyed to see you; the pleasure is so unexpected that I hardly know how to express myself. Scarce had he uttered this unmeaning compliment when he abruptly left Alfred, to follow a young lady who had just past him. Oh, fashion, glorious privilege for fools! exclaimed Alfred, provoked at Hamilton's interruption. I could have told you, by your remark, said a familiar voice, and immediately O' Hara

presented himself. No, shan't say a word about it—am glad to see you, that's enough; Captain O'Hara is no flatterer—believe you know it. Alfred bowed acknowledgement. So you've left college, my boy—congratulate you—hope, as you've passed the fiery ordeal, when brought to the standard of politeness, will not be found wanting; polished manners are necessary to form the officer and gentleman. Myself and another were the best educated, I believe, in all Kildare; 'twas a delightful time—the peacefulest of all my days; save a few unavoidable duels I had not an angry word with man or mortal. Oh, I recollect one day, and a most memorable day it was, I had a tremendous dispute, about some insignificant trifle, hardly worth consideration; however, the

little captain, meaning myself (for you must know I was so called by my companions) felt himself affronted, so fight I would. Well, the paces were measured, and aim was taken, but it all amounted to nothing, for we shook hands—thought no more about animosity, and were exceeding good friends till we altercated—faith! none dare offend me; honor was the only code of law I submitted to, and my sword proved a severe lawgiver, for it enforced obedience; the name of Captain O'Hara struck terror to all. My father predicted, when a mere boy, what I should be. Says he, one morning, to my mother, oh, I shall never forget, it appears as if only yesterday, and yet it is years and years ago—I well remember being at play, but with what I'm sure 'tis impossible to recol-

lect, and what wonder?—In the midst of the Captain's elaborate harangue, a loud laugh from Walter completely disconcerted him, and prevented the interesting continuation, much to the satisfaction of Alfred, who, escaping one tormenter, was exposed to the attacks of another.

Helen, equally mortified, was pestered with the incessant remarks of Miss Hardcastle, a facetious spinster of forty. She inveighed against the degeneracy that every where prevailed; called the morals of the present day odiously depraved—censured the fashions, as banishing delicacy, and lamented real taste was so little understood. She then entered fully into a minute detail of those instances that had come within her own knowledge. Helen, heartily tired of the contro-

versy, but more fatigued with the frequent repetition of—do you understand me—wished some fortunate accident would release her. Miss Hardcastle was joined by a powerful ally, Eliza Bentick; immediately room was made for her on the settee, and the subject discussed with renewed energy. Very opportunely Helen espied Cicelia Granger; she left the fair disputants to join her. What a solecism in good manners, exclaimed Miss Hardcastle, loud enough to be heard; this breach of politeness afforded her an inexhaustible theme. Captain! said Hamilton, tapping O'Hara on the shoulder, Misses Hardcastle and Bentick request your assistance to settle a point of honor. When acquainted with the subject, O'Hara felt the full force of burlesque, which he chose to call an excellent

jest, ingeniously converting it into a compliment paid his gallantry. Alfred enjoyed his confusion, and secretly encouraged Hamilton: this was sufficient, Walter resolved the Captain should not escape him.

Barclay, never backward at hoaxing, pretended to vindicate O'Hara, instead of which he exposed him to the unmerciful ridicule of Hamilton, who valued not his displeasure, for he was independent, and could indulge whatever caprice suggested. Thoughtless and inconsiderate, his vices were the effect of example; if his censure was severe 'twas not intentionally so; on witnessing its effect, immediately he relented, for his disposition was good and generous. Reared in the school of indulgence, Walter had never learned a harder lesson than

that taught by his own inclination; indolence and luxury enervated each noble passion; to think for himself was too much exertion. Fond of amusement, he caught the manners of his associates, and, like them, was thoughtless, volatile, and frivolous; vice bore the name of indiscretion; malice was miscalled frolic; and the distress of the unfortunate, true sport: to escape contamination, among such companions, Walter had been accounted a prodigy indeed.

CHAPTER X.

Of a sudden, a phænomenon was seen in the hemisphere of fashion—'twas no less than a cloud on the clear smooth aspect of Mr. Horace Barclay. What could cause such an unusual appearance? diviners, astronomers, and those skilled in these matters, were consulted; 'twas a subject of high importance, and required debate. In the midst of all this conjecture, a vulgar being, called report, revealed and made public the hidden

mystery. Barclay and a certain dame, of fickle notoriety, had a serious misunderstanding, which terminated in an irreparable breach. In vain the discarded favourite vowed and protested, swore and reswore future gratitude. Smiles, once slighted, were to cheer him no more!—but here, had evil ended, Barclay, in the language of defiance, had exclaimed, Fortune, I scorn thee! His friends, forsooth, must feel offended, because he had offended another; in disgrace with one, in disgrace with all. At the moment of highest expectation, the lovers of mischief received a severe disappointment, the storm had subsided, succeeded by a peaceful calm; in vain they looked for the traces of devastation—they were no where to be seen—all was hushed. It was confidently asserted that Barclay

and Seamore were closetted together three whole hours. What could be the subject of their conference?—it remained a profound secret. Surmise was busy; and either a loan or mortgage on his estate in Shropshire were their conclusions; be that as it may, Barclay looked as gay as ever—sported a new barouche—and regaled the fashionable world with an elegant entertainment.——Every article was scrutinized with the eyes of inquisitors; were they the same? The chandeliers, admired for their beauty, had, to the eye of prejudice, lost somewhat of their usual lustre; the tapers blazed not so brilliant; the very spirits of their liberal host were considered false; a mere disguise, to hide real discontent.

Miss Egerton, untinctured with that

gloomy philosophy which searches into causes and effects, enjoyed to the utmost, the present festive scene, seeing no reason why she should deprive herself of a moment's pleasure, by anticipating evil that might never happen, and what if it did? there were other Barclays, luminaries that shone with superior splendor, in the sphere she loved.

Helen, greatly mortified, encountered the Earl of Thor; she felt confused; 'twas not the confusion occasioned by meeting an old lover (for she never considered him as such); it was on Alfred's account. Ferguson, pressing her reluctant hand, led her to a settee, and pathetically describing the wound not yet healed, besought the balm of compassion. Yielding to surprise and vexation, Helen suffered him

to proceed without interruption;—auguring success from her silence, he renewed those unmeaning vows, which before had failed of interesting. Eloquence exhausted, the Earl paused, and Helen undeceived him.

Seamore, like the dissatisfied lover, strayed from fair to fair, without obtaining the entertainment he sought. Cassino at length invited, and he left the sweet flatterers to court the smiles of another.

Out of spirits, conversation had lost its wonted charm, but Seamore complained not: had he, the epithet of misanthrope had been applied. 'Twas impossible to remain dull when surrounded by beauty, loveliness, grace, and attraction: the misfortune of his inseparable friend, Barclay,

perhaps, had infected his mind with sympathetic gloom.

Alfred, with an emotion of envy, observed the assiduity of young Ferguson, but the marked disapprobation of Helen dispelled his fears; nevertheless, his bosom laboured with a secret pang—and suffered the perturbation of a lover. His eyes, intently fixed on the object of his solicitude, provoked the raillery of Sir Hubert Aldridge, some rival, I presume. Oh, woman, fair as inconstant, how many victims to those fallacious smiles? smiles more fallacious than potent—gifted with power supreme; one they annihilate, another they animate, inspire, make alive. But oh, more terrible than all these, one terrific frown imparts despair—that devourer! that living death!—is it

not so? said he, concluding the ridiculous rhapsody with a question directed to Alfred, as painful as it was impertinent. Forcing a smile, he replied, your conclusions are erroneous, and wholly without foundation—admire your denial—the very spirit of love—had sooner disbelieved an acknowledgment. Human nature is so prone to disguise, said a gentleman, joining in the conversation, that what most interests us seems an object of the utmost indifference. Admirably put in! retorted the knight; do you know them, Walcott?—oh, yes, intimately acquainted; the Earl of Thor and Miss Seamore. What, the lovely pupil of Miss Egerton?—the same; her to whom Granger paid a kind of sighing courtship. Indeed!—never heard of that.—Oh, 'twas a mere whisper, but

nothing can be concealed from your humble servant. Believe you; for faith you know every thing; what can be her motive for refusing the Earl? a title, in general, rarely fails of attracting. True; but Helen has proved invulnerable; suppose she loves another? the charming Adonis whom Seamore so liberally supports. This remark convinced the mortified Alfred he was unknown to the gentleman; and the elegant conversation continued. Poh! nonsense! resumed Walcott, 'tis a confounded fiction; Mordaunt is her half brother; depend upon it, Seamore's his father; I know what generosity is, it may influence a great deal, but Seamore has gone a step farther. Walcott, you are wrong, I'll not credit your assertion. If not his father, who can he be? Who can he be! 'tis impossible for me

to tell you, but I think you're wrong. Is the favourite really as handsome as he has been represented?—Judge for yourself, interrupted Alfred, rising with indignation, my name is Alfred Mordaunt, and the man who calls in question my right to that name, may receive, if he thinks proper, the satisfaction he requires; if not, allow me, nay, I dare call you both impertinent and insolent defamers. The astonished Sir Hubert, and more astonished Walcott, knew not what to reply; an aukward apology was attempted, and accepted with great good nature by the forgiving Alfred. Highly incensed at the aspersion, a moment's reflection subdued his emotion, and all he felt offended at was the freedom with which they spoke. To wound his feelings was not their intention, for he was

unknown; they uttered no more than the relation of others:—scandal alone had invented the tale, and to scandal he complained.

The susceptibility of his nature had received a deep wound; he sighed, as recollection brought to his memory a similar humiliation. I did not think it was so public, said he, mentally. Just Heaven, if true, what a fatal delusion am I indulging? Helen my sister! confusion! madness! desperation! the thought distracts me!—terrible conviction! For this the anxiety of Mr. Seamore; he fears, dreads a passion so destructive—ruin, misery, anguish, is in the idea. I tremble—the weight of guilt appals me. Helen, dear amiable girl, you stand on the verge of a dreadful precipice—one step further, and you sink into the awful gulph. I must, in-

deed, unravel this mystery; it involves my happiness, my peace, my future hopes; if once convinced, let me, a wretch forlorn, hide in obscurity my disgrace; let the knowledge that, though innocent, I have been such a mighty offender, silence those complaints directed against fate. Oppressed with sorrow, I'll mourn my lot; my woe shall reach the ear of Mr. Seamore—shall fill him with remorse. Helen my sister! horror unspeakable! he now called to mind that Sir Hubert seemed not to credit the report. Walcott was positive—where had he gained the information? perhaps he was an idle tattler, fond of repeating gossips stories; he felt curious to know more of him. Barclay was the most likely person, and to him he resorted. The biographer, you mean, said Barclay, (for by this appellation Walcott

was best known)—the life of every body he pretended to relate, and, like others of the fraternity, paid very little regard to authenticity. Fiction he artfully embellished, till it wore the aspect of truth, and so closely connected the one with the other, that detection was the least of his fears. Wallcott, said Barclay, by a happy facility at anecdote, gains admission into every fashionable assembly. Found essential to the novice, the unknown, and the demi-fashionable, his company is highly prized. If you have an enemy (and who is without) revenge you seek from Walcott; he furnishes you with the scandalous anecdote, the tale invented by malice, and the disgraceful act, never committed; if envy, slow fire, consumes your bosom, he bestows the allay; some degrading circumstance

detracts from the being you supposed perfect, till you cease to admire. Information he derives from a never failing source; being in the habit of assisting noblemen, he becomes familiar with their attendants; these worthy confidants of their master's secrets, reveal to Walcott what has been imparted to them, and more, the morceau, with embellishment and invention, is found sufficient to sate the appetite of slander. The father of Walcott, Mr. Foster Walcott, descended from the honorable tribe of money-lenders, and was allowed to possess—of conscience, one quantum more than the rest. Where pale distress, with devastatory steps pursued the luckless victim, there this sympathizer in human woe was sure to be seen. He lent and lent, received interest upon inte-

rest, but the principal remained unreturned, and he died a victim to avarice. His son, impoverished by his loss, could not continue the profitable business, but if he was unable to serve his father's friends, he knew those that could, and with admirable facility pocketed the recommendation fee.—Though much disturbed in his mind, Alfred was, nevertheless, highly diverted with the account Barclay gave of Walcott. He expressed his surprise that men of fortune and character should countenance such a despicable being. Your wonder would cease, replied Barclay, were you to reflect on his utility. The mind that luxury has rendered effeminate brooks not opposition, yet requires a something to employ its vacancy. Walcott steps in, and is freely admitted—on

him is vented ill humour, or the free joke, unbounded by respect. He smiles, betrays not disapprobation; and for this pliability of temper, is styled, a poor, civil, harmless fellow. —Take another view of him: Walcott, never mind by what means, has a something to say on every subject.— The chit-chat of the day, interesting topics, and the most fashionable amusements, escape him not. Them he accurately describes; this hint genius improves, calls to its aid the imitative art;—and if whim so leads, produces an exact counterpart. The mouldings, the pannels of Lord———'s barouche, the colour of his landau, are not forgot; and for these desirable acquisitions, character and fame are overlooked.— Wonder no more, when you find men, like Walcott, caressed by people of

distinction.—And shall the words of such an one, said Alfred, mentally, make an impression on me? It were wilfully sacrificing my own peace. He cannot substantiate what he advanced. Witness his confusion, when in me he beheld the person so vilely defamed. His malice seemed chiefly directed to Mr. Seamore; unacquainted with that sympathy, which recommends the unfortunate to protection, he vilified him for that which he bestows on me; and seeking to assign some more powerful motive, urged the claim of consanguinity, and boldly calls me his son.—His son! oh! God, let me not pronounce a name that blasts my hopes, blights my prospects, and spreads desolation through every pleasing scene. If so, joy, peace, happiness, farewell. Henceforth, aliens to my bosom, retire

far distant from my sight, nor mock me with what I never can enjoy.—As wakes the dreamer, by delusion led to pleasure's fair domain, where, sweet, the captive senses rove, to scenes of real distress, cries in heart-piercing voice, Why was the charm dispelled? so mourn I the live-long day, that e'er a tale so sad, so dire, should to my heart convey a pang like this!

Helen passed him. Starting from his reverie, he exclaimed, 'Oh! sight endeared, that to these eyes impart a weight of bliss, like that which mortal hope receives, when ope the gates of paradise. Yet I must not gaze; no more contemplate those angelic features, feast on those smiles, that well had bid discordant passions cease.

Helen, surprised at his silence, chid his inattention. He pressed her hand;

his trembled exceedingly, and filled her with alarm. Are you not well? she enquired. The question recalled Alfred to recollection; and recovering himself, he dissipated her tender alarm.

CHAPTER XI.

SEAMORE began to think of leaving town, for scarce a carriage was to be seen on the fashionable pavé.

Helen heard his determination with pleasure. She longed to escape the confusion of high life; at least, she would enjoy, in the country, some intervals of rest.

The ill health of Miss Granger increasing, she removed to Brighton, for the benefit of the sea air; and hired a house on the Marine Parade. Thither she was accompanied by her brother

and Miss Egerton; who, with extreme regret, resigned the pleasing charge of instructing Helen; adding, very complimentary, that by this time, the fair pupil required no further tuition, nay, had outstripped her preceptress.

Helen was highly pleased at the release, and parted with sincere pleasure. Neither was Miss Egerton sorry; offended at the duplicity of Seamore, though she chose not to resent it, she completely gave him up, and directed her attention toward another quarter.

The parting of Helen and Cecilia was truly affecting. Miss Granger, aware that her dissolution was near approaching, addressed her friend in terms eloquently pathetic. Of a sentimental cast, her feelings were too exquisite, and to every insignificant

trifle she gave the highest importance, thus adding to life's gloomy scene a shade yet more sombre. She knew her brother loved Helen, but mentioned not the subject, lest it should give pain; for well she could describe the pang of unrequited love—too well describe such sighs as lovers heave! The gentle Cecilia, like young Hope, with buoyant look, bid expectation live, nor ere disappointed what her angelic countenance promised. With prospects bright as morning sun, gay pleasure laughed the hours away; from each fair flower such fragrance breathed, such rich perfume, as cheered the senses, left not one unrefreshed. Revelling in sweets, the maid securely roved; but ah! the spoiler came, and from her damask cheek, the roses plucked; the lillies moistened with a tear, for soft her

told the tale of timid love 'scaped from the breast of lowly youth, and now she saw the struggling pang that rives the heart; too proud to sue, too generous to persuade; despair, he called his friend, his only aid; as pity's balm allays the mind it cannot heal, so did the words' of Cecilia; she bid him hope, that soon the time would come, when with her heart, she would her hand bestow. No, lovely maid, such worth, such excellence, were ill bestowed on Percy's humble son; reserve those heavenly smiles to grace the dome of wealth; they'd mock the cot that shields my humble love. The tale, once told, no more I'll boldly dare; but ere I go, forgive the presumptuous youth, who did your ear invade with his free suit. Yet, yet, I guiltless am; the fault's not mine; for had those eyes less brilliant

shone, that face so shap'd in beauty's mould, had not revealed such matchless charms; that accent soft, like mercy's cadence, beguiled me of my care. I told, confessed, what proves my mimisery, and your exalted goodness: subdued, overpowered, I've just resolution to refuse. He ceased, he fled, and in the ocean's bosom found a grave.

Cecilia mourned his hapless lot, and for his fate unceasing wept. Helen, who sincerely esteemed the amiable girl, with tears pronounced the word farewell. She was surprised by Alfred indulging soft melancholy; but consolation was unnecessary, for at his approach all sorrow vanished: the quick transition astonished and delighted him; it whispered peace to his troubled bosom, and, like sweet oblivion, buried

woe. Helen lamented how little she could enjoy his company. Last night how I suffered at not being able to speak to you; to-night and the next we are also engaged; but have patience, Alfred, and when we get to Windsor, I promise you amends. Will you be content? Recollect, dear girl, I did not complain. This remark called a rosy blush into the cheek of Helen, and for a moment she felt confused; but the vivacity of Alfred reassured her she caught the contagion, and appeared alike in spirits. A conversation, highly interesting to both, commenced. Barclay had promised to use his influence with Seamore to prevent the separation Alfred so much dreaded. He alleged, in excuse, the preference he gave the law. This declaration flattered the vanity, and at

the same time promoted the interest of Barclay. He wished to prevent the intimacy of O'Hara; it was inimical to his own views. He feared, should the Captain gain an ascendancy over Seamore, his power would diminish; and that, above all things, he did not wish. Seamore, wholly engaged with the preparations for his departure, could hardly dedicate one moment to the joys of friendship. So much the better, thought Barclay, he will have the less time for reflection, and in the hurry may forget O'Hara. His conclusions were far from erroneous.—Bustle and confusion supplied the place of order; he was ill attended, and his commands disobeyed, a circumstance that too frequently occurs where there are too many servants. Seamore, out of humour, and three hours later than

he wished, arrived at his villa, so called; it was situated two miles from Windsor, on the borders of the majestic Thames. The lawn extended to its verge, skirted on each side with lofty oaks. The house was light and commodious, fitted up in the modern taste; the windows falling to the ground, opened on a lawn, perfumed with a variety of beautiful flowers, virandas shaded the balcony from the sun, embellished with rare exotics, showing to advantage the taste and splendor of their possessor, costliness being their best recommendation. A seat, beautifully situated for rural contemplation, was appropriately placed beneath a branching willow, whose boughs, reclining in luxuriant loveliness, embraced the quietly flowing Thames. Marine flowers, sea pinks,

and weeds, with spars, and curious shells, artfully strewed the ground, and gave to the whole a truly acquatic appearance. This spot, as a vestige, called Miss Egerton to the memory of Seamore; for to that lady's romantic taste, he owed this pleasing addition. Helen, employed in adjusting her *boudoir*, avoided the angry chiding of her father; displeased with every thing, he vented his spleen on Alfred, who could not possibly escape him. This was not right, that had been omitted, and, in short, he uttered incessant complaint. To this severe pennance Alfred submitted with patience; he knew that a reply, instead of appeasing, had but the more irritated.

No sooner did the news of Seamore's arrival reach the ears of his fashionable neighbours than they im-

mediately came to pay their respects, and to pour forth their congratulations; the pleasure was so great, so unexpected (though he had previously announced his intention) that they hardly knew how to express themselves: every article underwent an examination, and was re-admired, though what they had seen ten thousand times. Lord Cranmer surveyed the exotics, they were beautiful, exquisitely rare, oh! charming indeed! Lady Dunmore was of the same opinion; the Hon. Miss Fitzmorris preferred the flowers that decorated the lawn; this led to a long and interesting dispute, at least interesting to those who were engaged in it; Helen chose a neutral part, but was not permitted to remain silent, her work-table excited the notice of Miss Carter, it was the handsomest an-

ticle she had seen; of whom was it purchased? Helen could not recollect; to Alfred she referred—he satisfied the curiosity of the fair enquirer. Did you see Miss Mortimer? but this was only to introduce her name a-propos, she has married Mr. Barry; I'm told her cousin Maria nearly pined herself to death on the occasion, for you must know she entertained a kind of penchant for the self-same object; of the two, were I Barry, I should certainly give the preference to Maria—Miss Mortimer is not to be compared to her, she is a mere nonentity—possessed of no accomplishments whatever, and she dresses so odiously outré—her person is unaccountably vulgar, it has not the least appearance of gentility. I thought you were very good friends, said Helen; so we are, my dear, replied Miss

Carter, with admirable nonchalance, but you must not expect we are to remain blind to the imperfections of our friends, because they are such, 'twould be acting the part of a dissembler. To this new fangled system of sincerity Helen would not subscribe, and filled the mind of the fair traducer with many fears; it undoubtedly was her intention to inform Mrs. Barry of what had passed, for she saw no reason why Helen should be offended with what pleased every female, namely, ridiculing another; on this account she shortened her visit; I will at least be first, said she mentally, and repaired to the house of Mrs. Barry; her dear friend, was fortunately at home, and flew to embrace her; the usual salutations being over, the usual subject was renewed, who had departed, who had

arrived; among the latter, the name of Seamore was mentioned; Mrs. Barry really was pleased, but an insinuation given by Miss Carter, changed her countenance and her manner likewise, the intended visit was postponed, indeed never paid. Helen, though secretly sorry, paid too much regard to etiquette to let it appear. The once intimate acquaintance accidently met, the glow of resentment tinged the cheek of Mrs. Barry, that of Helen caught the contagion, and without knowing the reason, they mutually took no notice of each other. This was the effects of Helen's candour, and had she possessed a mind less generous than her's really was, the conduct of Mrs. Barry had converted her defender into her defamer. Who would act with sincerity? learn but

address and you learn every thing; this requisite qualification saved the exposure of Miss Carter, and she not only continued very good friends with Mrs. Barry, but Helen likewise.

Alfred, agreeable to the promise he had received, enjoyed continually the company of Helen. Seamore again renewed his vigilance; each look he magnified, till tortured by the fancied discovery, his bosom experienced a pang severer than certainty could have inflicted; several ambiguous words escaped him which could not be interpreted, because not understood, yet they were sufficient to cast a gloom on the conviviality that had otherwise prevailed. The tale was not a false one, said Alfred, mournfully, I am his son; spite of all caution his emotion betrays him; why not reveal a secret, that if

concealed may involve us in endless misery ? but he delays the communication ; feels reluctant to give a blow so mighty ! 'tis praise-worthy, 'tis kindness ; I'll spare his feelings, and court the wound ; I'll tell him I suspect I am his son ! repeat what I've heard, aud mark the effect. Alfred promised what he had not resolution to perform ; Seamore preserved a gloomy silence ; thoughtful and abstracted, he hardly spoke, and when he did 'twas in the harsh language of reproof. What a change, what a reverse ! how much it would have astonished his friends in town, those beings who envied his equipage, and called him a complete happy man ! mistaken people, who judged by a false criterion ; well say they, we could not pry into his closet ;—true,

perhaps if you had, the discovery might not have repaid your trouble.

Helen, more melancholy than ever, for now she had leisure to reflect, was compelled to ask the provoking question, is this the happiness I promised myself?—convinced of its truth she yielded a mournful assent.

CHAPTER XII.

The weather being uncommonly fine Seamore and Helen joined the dashing pedestrians, who were exhibiting themselves on the public walks. Alfred, left to himself, was unexpectedly enlivened by the presence of Mr. Horace Barclay. What, quite alone? said he; Alfred answered in the affirmative; indebted to my compassion for relieving you—have a piece of news to communicate that will promote laughter, it relates to the biographer, a gentleman whom Walcott grossly vili-

fied, resolved on being revenged, while yet talking of the defamation, he saw the defamer enter a coffee-house; immediately an idea struck him, which he communicated to his friend, and together they placed themselves in a box next to Walcott; according to custom he was very attentive, and listened to their conversation; it concerned himself—he was doubly interested. Speaking of Walcott, Henley exclaimed to Nesbitt, oh! name him not; an incendiary, an assassin! he attacks in the dark, and thus escapes the reward of his delinquency, but I'll unkennel the scurrilous dog, I know his haunts, my vengeance shall pursue him, in spite of concealment; I owe the slanderer a debt which my cane shall pay this very night! Where will you find him? re-

marked Nesbitt. At his patron Fortescue's; the parasite dares not be absent from his entertainment, his buffoonery will be in high requisition; if I am disappointed I'll seek him to-morrow morning at Marlow's public breakfast. Believe me, Henley, the fellow is beneath your resentment; I'll prove he is, returned Henley, for he shall have the chastisement due to a scoundrel. All this time the trembling culprit kept himself quiet, afraid to move, lest he should be discoverd; with joy unspeakable he heard the friends leave the coffee-house; to provide for his own safety, which he could no otherwise than by ight, was his next care.

At night, as Henley expected, Walcott was no where to be found; his patron, unacquainted with the

cause of his absence, felt offended, and resolved to speak his mind, but this opportunity was denied him. Day succeeded day, and no Walcott; the complaint was general, and his friends, one and all, consigned the absentee to the contempt they conceived he merited.

Now, as ill luck would have it, a certain lady, the wife of one of his friends, chanced to make a faux-pas, and as the partner of her flight was wholly unknown, the honor was ascribed to Walcott; an inuendo indirectly given by Henley confirmed the opinion. Husband's trembled! wives reviled! and bachelors secretly rejoiced! the affair afforded ample conversation for all ranks, and the ultimatum was the total disgrace of Walcott; his non-appearance affixed the more indelible

the foul stain of guilt; and the injured husband, breathing vows of vengeance, fruitlessly pursued the imaginary seducer. The slanderer suffering in his turn from the effects of slander, like many of his victims, was wholly guiltless of the charge, and had been believed so, but for the insinuation of Henley, who amply retaliated. When revenge, as he thought, had subsided, Walcott made his re-appearance; the exasperated husband, yielding to passion, bestowed on the violator of his honor the chastisement due to the enormity of his offence; recovering from the state of stupefaction he was thrown into, Walcott expostulated, but like too many who are prejudged, was disregarded; finding no argument could convince his sceptical chastiser of his innocence, he sought

mitigation of punishment by flight, and being more alert than his pursuer, whom the weight of sorrow might have retarded, effected his purpose. The unhappy fugitive cursing the malignancy of fate, deplored that fatal mistake, which the strong opposition of the cane prevented him from obviating. Walcott, guilty of one offence, was to suffer from the imputation of another; the weapon he had so successfully used was now presented to his own bosom, aimed at his peace, character, reputation, and what he far more prized, his interest. Time, 'tis true, revealed his innocence, but many who heard and listened to the accusation heard not his justification; many, wilfully blind, seeing, would not see, and hearing, would not hear; that which had formerly yielded him support, was now like the

unprofitable store, to shew its worthlessness. Shame, disgrace, and self-reproach attended him. Could every defamer meet the punishment of Walcott, how many would spurn that worst of traffic, the character of others. Alfred joined in the laugh; Barclay could not suppress. On the return of Seamore the tale was repeated, and produced similar merriment; so prone are we to censure in another that of which we are hourly guilty; the subject was a prolific one, and proved inexhaustible.

As if by magic, on beholding Barclay, Seamore was instantly metamorphosed, his countenance brightened, and the frown of care vanished; having much to say, the friends retired, to have a private interview, affording the like indulgence to Alfred and He-

len; from this they had been prevented by the watchful care of Seamore. Alfred longed ardently to unburthen his mind to Helen, and seek from her the consolation she most required for herself; she suffered severely from the imposed prohibition, and her countenance betrayed her inward conflict; she wished to inspire Alfred with hope, but he had yielded to despair; his soul shrunk from ingratitude, he abhorred the foul stain, for much he felt himself indebted to the bounty of Seamore; he had not only educated him far beyond his expectations, but placed him in a situation much above his hopes, and continued his friendship; the reserve he manifested hurt his feelings, as an independent individual, yet that independence felt restrained by the recollection, that he owed every

thing to his generosity; and should he not wish me for his daughter's husband? are all other favors to be cancelled? forbid such a thought ye sacred powers! I will not prove ungrateful. But this reasoning he found insufficient, and embraced the opportunity that presented itself. To Helen he imparted his sentiments; she heard him with a mixture of apprehension, with a sensation of blended pleasure and pain; she wished him not to incur her father's displeasure, yet could find no alternative between the resignation of all her happiness, and an encouragement of his hopeless passion; he had only solicited an interest in her bosom—what, should she give death to his hopes by saying it existed not, when every throb had him for its object?

She perceived the agitation with which he awaited her answer, protesting on it depended his misery or happiness; and should she, in compliance with the wishes of a tyranical parent, plunge a being who tenderly loved her in sorrow. No; 'twas an act she could not perform, and the kindness of her reply reanimated the desponding Alfred. He vowed to live, and live for her alone; defied the power of fate to separate them, and in the enthusiasm of imagination already tasted the supremest bliss.

No more the victim of despair, vivacity illumined his countenance, and the enraptured youth, incapable any longer of using precaution, let drop the veil that had for a time obscured the sight of Seamore; his conduct awakened perception, and called forth the

most bitter remonstrance. He expatiated on his ingratitude, inveighed against the disobedience of Helen, and uttered all that indignation could dictate. His reproaches were too just for Alfred to attempt justification; therefore he bore them in silence. This pacific disposition irritated Seamore; he became scurrilous, talked most insulting of favours conferred, and threatened their discontinuance, if certain terms were not complied with. At this the agitation of Alfred increased to a dangerous height, the opprobrious words sunk deep in his bosom; but a recollection of the utterer served to quell the risings of indignant pride. Seamore next directed his invectives towards Helen; here Alfred thought silence would no longer be a proof of mere abject submission; but 'twould amount to ta-

cit acknowledgement, and he warmly opposed this outrage committed against love. He vindicated her conduct with zeal, and threw upon himself the whole blame; he spared not rhetoric, to soothe the exasperated Seamore: for he knew how to allow for the wounded feelings of a parent disappointed in his hopes of an only daughter. He could even pity his sufferings, and condemn the author of them—the victim of self-condemnation stood confessed in all his looks. The interesting expression of his countenance disarmed the rising resentment of Seamore, and impelled by an emotion he could not account for, he pressed the hand of Alfred, and left him.

Not softer stole the thrill of love, or breathed delicious rapture through the veins, than did this simple shaking of

a hand; it left Alfred powerless—his heart pronounced him traitor; gratitude accused him of the mighty treason, but love laughed at the charge, called it venial, and a sight of Helen confirmed the decision. She had received a similar harangue from Seamore, but not mixed with so much of the pathetic; she treated his accusation with the most unpardonable irony, protesting the whole was a scheme of her's to plague him, as he seemed so watchful, and had been so very importunate for the Earl of Thor. But he had birth and fortune to recommend him, said Seamore. The very reason, sir, that an increase of wealth would not have been any acquisition to him, to Alfred it will. Alfred is beneath you; his birth——Cannot be ignoble, or you would not protect him; and admitting

it were, a rose, springing from thistles, would be accounted an exotic, but a rose among roses is no rarity. Indignation marked the countenance of Seamore, and ill concealing his anger, he called Alfred by every illiberal epithet. The more culpable, then, is the conduct of my father, said Helen, and the less blameable am I for imitating him. Had you educated Alfred as an unworthy being, I had distinguished him as such. You loaded him with favours, caressed him on all occasions, and only call him ignoble to me. Pardon me, sir, when I tell you, if your assertion is well founded, you have indeed outstepped the bounds of generosity. Prudence has been forgotten in your kindness to Alfred; by exalting an unworthy object, you have placed it in his power to become conspicuously base, and are

yourself the source of his ingratitude. Allow me to ask you if the discovery of his unworthiness is a new one, or only new to me? Somewhat staggered by this question, Seamore seemed at a loss for a reply, and evaded giving a direct answer. My father, I trust, resumed Helen, wishes me to act from conviction. Certainly, was the answer. He must then allow me to exercise that privilege in regard to Alfred; and when convinced of his worthlessness, I will be the first to tell him so. She then left Seamore to his meditations; they were of a most unpleasant nature; he had nothing to hope from such a daughter, whose chief pleasure consisted in thwarting him, and acting in opposition to his wishes. The keen pang of self-reproach rived his very heart. He had no claim on the affection of Helen; he

had ever evinced toward her the utmost coolness, neglected her infant state, and now had to mourn over the flower left to the rearing of strangers. For fragrance it yielded bitterness; a premature and irregular growth defied the restraining fence, and left Seamore to sigh at those wanderings unchecked by parental reproof. Helen, in defiance of all his menaces, paid the same attention to Alfred. This open rebellion he could ill brook, but at times he persuaded himself the whole was, as she said, a scheme of her's to plague him, for the entreaty he had used on a former occasion; but should her assertion prove finesse, to conceal real passion, what would be the result? Disgrace and——He could not proceed.—Oh! just Heaven exclaimed he, striking his forehead with violence, how de-

served are all the pangs I now endure? Helen has never experienced from me a father's affection, and can I claim a daughter's love; She has only known me for a cold-hearted unsocial being, whose austerity has froze the warm current of youthful love. Accustomed to consider me as rigid and unfeeling, how could I expect her confidence? Secrecy and deception she thinks herself entitled to practise, if not from the motive of retaliation, to obtain peace, for when did I show her lenity? Oh, justly blinded by fate, I have exposed myself to the very danger I ought to have shunned. Should she indeed love Alfred whom can I blame but myself?

CHAPTER XIII.

To Barclay Seamore resorted—he besought his advice. This was readily granted, and it was agreed that mild measures should be adopted. Persuasion, said Barclay, will succeed, where coercion has failed. Alfred is not ungrateful, and may soon be awakened to a sense of what he owes you. Seamore with a sigh replied, 'tis as I suspected, would there were any other alternative. Be not precipitate; I'll speak to him, and let you know the result. Barclay, in the most insinuating

language, addressed Alfred; but received not the communication he expected; for Alfred esteemed him not, and often accused himself of ingratitude to one who showed him so much kindness; yet he found it impossible to conquer the aversion he felt. There was something attractive in his highly polished manners, but it appeared as the gloss that conceals imperfection. His unadulterated heart, incapable of antipathy, would fain have returned the good will on all occasions shown him; but his refractory tongue refused the ungracious office, and much to the dissatisfaction of Barclay, he accepted with coldness his liberal proffers of friendship. Seamore, with disappointment, heard of Barclay's ill success. He thought of O'Hara. Now it so happened, that just at the same period

the Captain was thinking of him.—O'Hara had a great penchant for the country; the air was so salubrious, every thing appeared so pleasant, and the people looked so healthy. Bestriding his faithful Rosinante, he arrived post-haste at Windsor; Seamore was delighted to see him. This, unfortunately, the Captain did not know, and was full of apprehension. O'Hara, who laid great stress on the first impression, took special care to inform Seamore he could not stop one moment; and that, from zeal to serve him, he had postponed all other business.

Seamore was extremely obliged, felt himself highly indebted, and uttered all but what he thought on receiving.—So warm a reception, O'Hara repented of his precipitancy; but the

word was spoken, and could not be recalled; he must, therefore, abide by it.—You see, Sir, said he, I did not forget my promise; a most advantageous opportunity now offers, which, I hope, Mr. Mordaunt will embrace. It may be instantly obtained through the interest, or rather the friendship of a friend of mine.—He then most dexterously gave Seamore to understand no douceur was expected.—Oh! my dear Sir, a thing of that kind would affront him more than if you called his honor in question. I recollect once, a gentleman whom I served in the like way, offered him—no, he did not offer, he only hinted something about a compliment; and he was so much offended, that nothing would appease him.

Seamore, on being made acquainted

with the particulars, was pleased in reality, and hoped Alfred would be the same. Overjoyed at the completion of his wishes, he pressed the Captain to dine with him. This he, of course, out of regard to his word, was compelled to decline.—But you will, surely, take some refreshment.—I must not refuse you, replied O'Hara, who made an extraordinary good luncheon, protesting the ride had given him an excellent appetite.—Not at all, returned his hospitable host.

As feels the luckless victim, escaped from danger, on beholding his persecutor before him, so felt Alfred at the sight of O'Hara. Helen, with silent expression, gazed on him; interchanging looks with each other, with apprehension they awaited the sequel.

Miss Seamore, I hope I have the

pleasure of seeing you well; but the enquiry is unnecessary, for you look charming.

Helen, with a constrained air, replied to his compliment.

Turning to Alfred, he accosted him in the most friendly manner. He then repeated what he had previously informed Seamore. When the voluble Captain had exhausted himself, he paused; no doubt, expecting an answer from Alfred. But he, incapable of disguising his feelings, could not speak. In vain he endeavoured to acquire fortitude. The looks of Helen subdued him.

On the countenance of O'Hara disappointment was visible; while that of Seamore glowed with resentment. Alfred, like one surrounded by difficulties, knew not how to extricate himself. If

he appeared pleased, what would Helen think? and if he suffered repugnance to betray him, what would Seamore say? The Captain himself, offended at his indifference, would with justice call him fickle; besides, he had assigned no reason for the alteration of his mind. Relying on the interference of Barclay, he ventured to ask when the appointment would take place?

Why directly, if you please, returned the Captain.

His answers deprived of all hope the disconsolate Alfred.—Seamore, at no loss to guess the cause of his reluctance, appeared not to notice it; and invited the Captain to view his garden. With an obsequious smile, O'Hara followed his conductor. Every thing pleases the man disposed to find fault with nothing. Whatever he saw ex-

cited his admiration; but his opinion was not delivered, till, either by the turn of countenance, or some other circumstance, he discovered to which object the preference was given. By this happy coincidence, the favorite of Seamore became the same with him. Expatiating on the beauty of every shrub and plant, Seamore detained him an unconscionable while; for never were two men so industriously bent on one subject. The aim of Seamore was to detain the Captain till dinner; and that of O'Hara, to grace with his presence the festive board of his friend, but yet, not to betray a wish of doing so. He was, therefore, wonderfully surprised when the liveried messenger gave the summons to dinner. All the way, the Captain did nothing but reproach himself; blaming his own neg-

ligence; nor ceased, till Seamore reminded him it was too late to retrieve his error.—I believe you're right, said he; so I'll complain no more, but impute my fault to the right cause, the beauty of your garden.

O'Hara, with no small share of satisfaction, partook of an entertainment sumptuous and elegant. After which, to the great regret of Seamore, he rose to depart. Why, my dear friend, said the witty Captain, if you so much desire my company, you can have it another day.

Perhaps, Seamore had already thought of this expedient; be that as it may, O'Hara was afraid he might not, and was willing to afford his friend as much pleasure as possible. Seamore, shaking the hand of his guest, assured him he should always

be glad of his company. Recollecting this invitation was general, he begged the Captain to name a day; adding, the nearer its approach, the greater his pleasure.

How delightful to be persuaded to the performance of an act we have already determined on! this satisfaction was felt by O'Hara. Returning Seamore thanks for the honor done him, he with well counterfeited delicacy neglected to fix any particular time. This omission had due weight with Seamore, and he gave the delicate Captain no cause to complain.—Upon my honor, said he, with ingenuous confusion, your hospitality reminds me of Admiral O'Connor. When I was at Dublin, he invited me to make his house my home. O'Hara, says he, why where's the use of your going

among strangers? No, my dear boy, says I, (for we were just like two brothers), I shall not be among strangers; I have so many friends, they cannot spare me a moment. And now it is as much as I can possibly do, to say How d'ye? Oh! is it so? says he; well, I'm sure I thought as much about his meaning as you might. It was then early in the morning. Well, we dined, we drank tea; that over, the bottle went round (and pretty briskly too). By this time I forgot my engagement, my friends, and the hour too. The sun, taking his diurnal circuit, began to inform me what I had not done. O'Connor laughed heartily; I abused him; and much he had to do to pacify me. In this jovial manner we spent three whole days; I reproaching him, and he calling it a

good frolic. Fortunately for Seamore, an evening star did as much for him, as the sun had done for O'Connor; it induced his guest to pronounce a parting farewell. Mounting his horse, the Captain was out of sight in an instant.

What various emotions, one and the same object can excite in the bosom of different persons; those of Seamore were truly pleasurable, while those of Alfred were scarce endurable.—My doom is fixed, unalterably fixed, exclaimed he, and at this momentous crisis too. Helen, loved object of my adoration, has made me happy, supremely so. She confessed her passion, yes, owned her love. Can I forget the sweetly thrilling accent? No; by that pang it caused her to reveal, by that glow, dear proof of bashful innocence, she shall not repent her confi-

dence. Were I his son!—why this solicitude? No, no, I should not thus feel. He wishes for my absence, that Helen may gratify his ambition. Too well he knows her generosity; uninfluenced by wealth, no sordid motive inspires her actions. Oh! fortune, cruel and relentless, 'tis now I feel your hate. Will not supplication deprecate your wrath, or have you vowed eternal enmity? To render myself worthy of Helen, what would I not do? but there is no possibility. Can she forget my inferiority, the distinction fate has made? 'tis presumptuous to think so.—Indulging his sad soliloquy, the unhappy Alfred suffered the deepest distress. Helen, equally sorrowful, in vain attempted to banish reflection. On the interference of Barclay she depended;—but should he not

succeed? The idea was too terrible; her heart palpitated, her bosom throbbed; and she suffered that exquisite agony, which attends the separation of a beloved object; suspence added to her sufferings.

Seamore derived consolation from the promise of O'Hara; for he never once doubted of its speedy fulfilment.—But the Captain was a man of the world; and knew that a favour when conferred was more likely to be forgotten, than before its performance. He had no great opinion of gratitude; it was a sentiment he did not subscribe to. Now, thought he, is the golden opportunity; if I let it slip, O'Hara, blame yourself.—But this was not his intention, and with admirable ingenuity he digested his plans.

Barclay, as sanguine as Seamore,

relished not the visit of O'Hara; for, like him, he thought the event certain. Alfred, with earnestness, besought his assistance. The Captain, said he, boasts of his honor, and will not surely forfeit it.

Barclay smiled; for he knew how vast the difference was between promises and their performance. Alfred, cheered by the consolation he offered, began to cherish hope all might yet be well. The temporary separation that would take place, if he was articled to Barclay, was not half so terrible as the final one, which the acceptance of O'Hara's offer threatened; he should still be near Helen.

END OF VOL. I.

E. Blackader, Printer, Took's Court, Chancery Lane, London.